VIDEO GAMES ☠ MUSIC ☠ COMICS

FLUX

ISSUE #1 • NO FASHION

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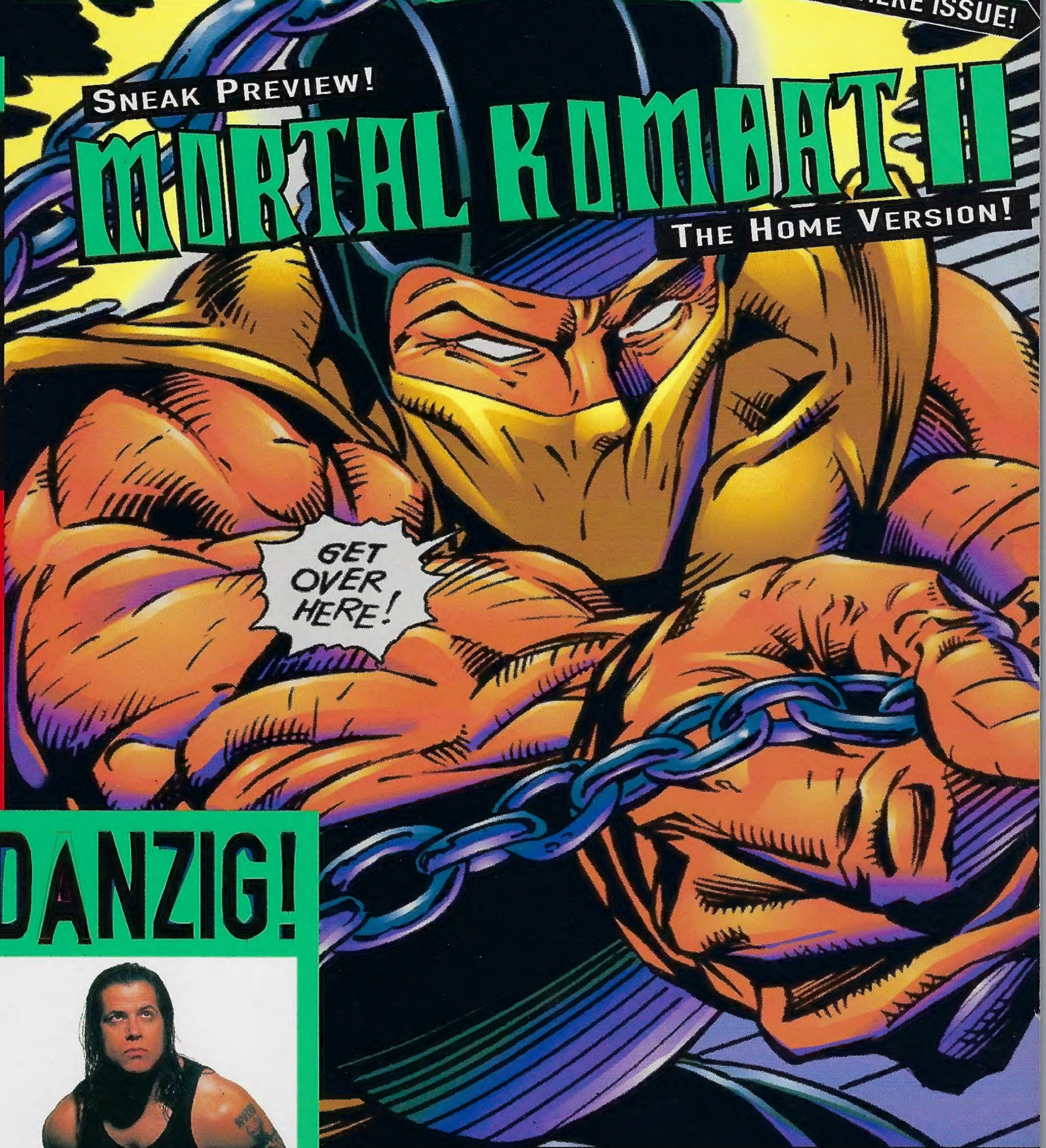
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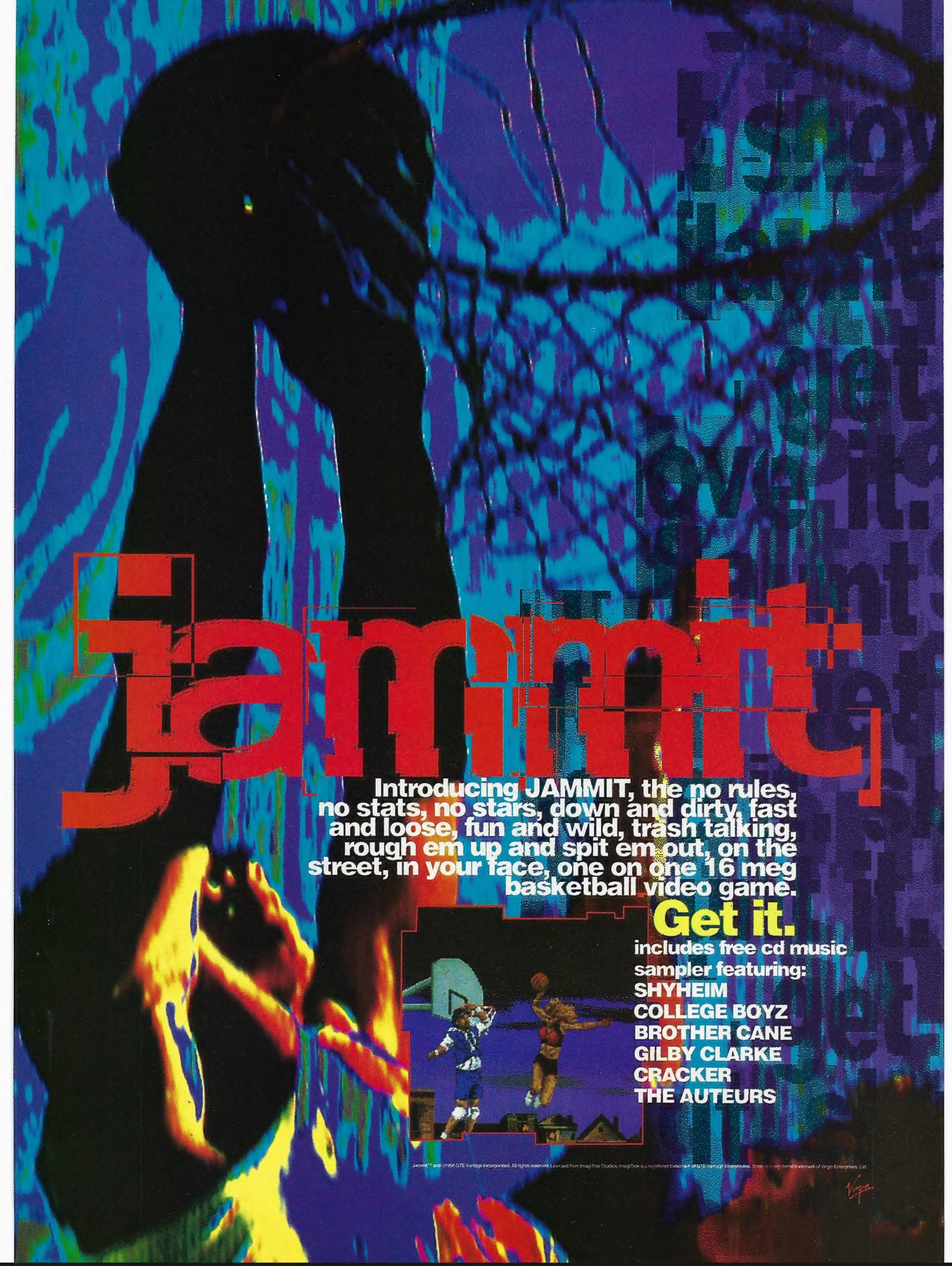

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COVER PHOTO OF GLENN DANZIG BY MARK LEIALOHA • MORTAL KOMBAT ART BY PATRICK ROLO COURTESY MALIBU COMICS

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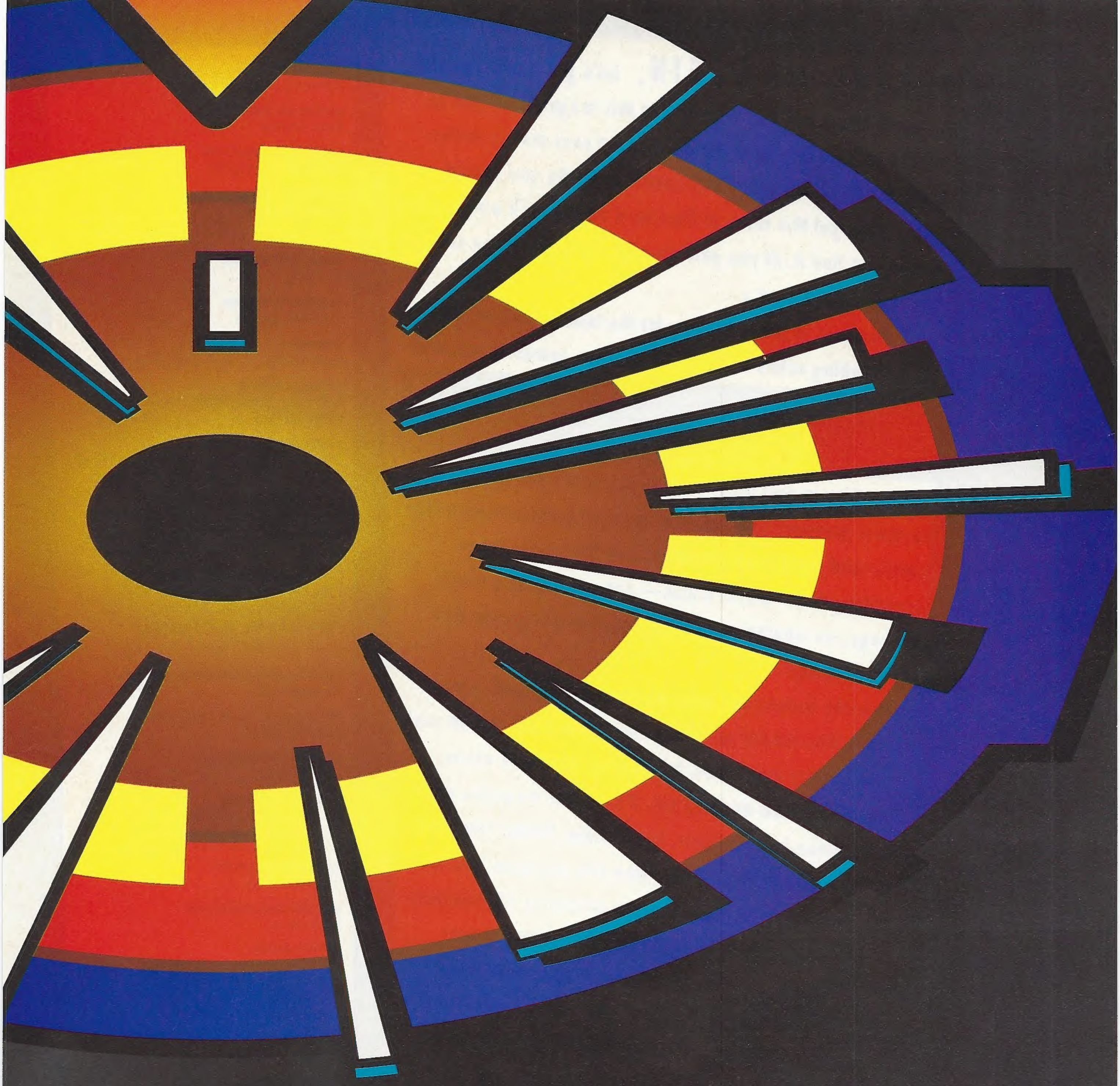

THE END OF TODAY...

ZERO HOUR

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BEFORE WE BEGIN, let's get one thing out in the open: There will be no fashion in this magazine. If you're looking to learn how to make a hat out of your mom's underpants or what body part Cindy Crawford thinks you should pierce next, put this issue of Flux back on the rack where a cool person can find it. (If you paid already, too bad. You're not getting your money back.)

However, if you're looking for the fattest, loudest, most skull-crushing action in the world of video games, music and comics, Flux is your mag. We take the best video game reviews, previews and tips, mix in sneak peeks at upcoming comics and profiles of hot artists, add the inside dirt on everything that's cool in music—and put it all in a kickin' package you wouldn't be embarrassed to bring up to that snotty cashier.

Welcome to Generation Flux

But why believe us? Sure we think Flux is cool—we wrote it. Why should you plunk down your hard earned cash for yet another mag? Well, take a long, hard look at our table-of-contents and find out. What other magazine delivers the Stone Temple Pilots, Rob Zombie, Mortal Kombat II, Rob Liefeld and Akira? Where else can you learn how to blow up a public fountain, the fine art of fake I.D. construction and the secret to making your entire school smell like Nightcrawler's tush? Who else gives you a sneak preview at the next Star Wars trilogy and a listing of the top 100 video game tips?

Flux puts it all together. Music. Comics. Video games. No fashion. What else could you ask for? Probably a hell of a lot more—but we need to save something for the next issue...

Hey dude, check out the flip book!
FLUX

KEVIN HENSON

WRITE US!
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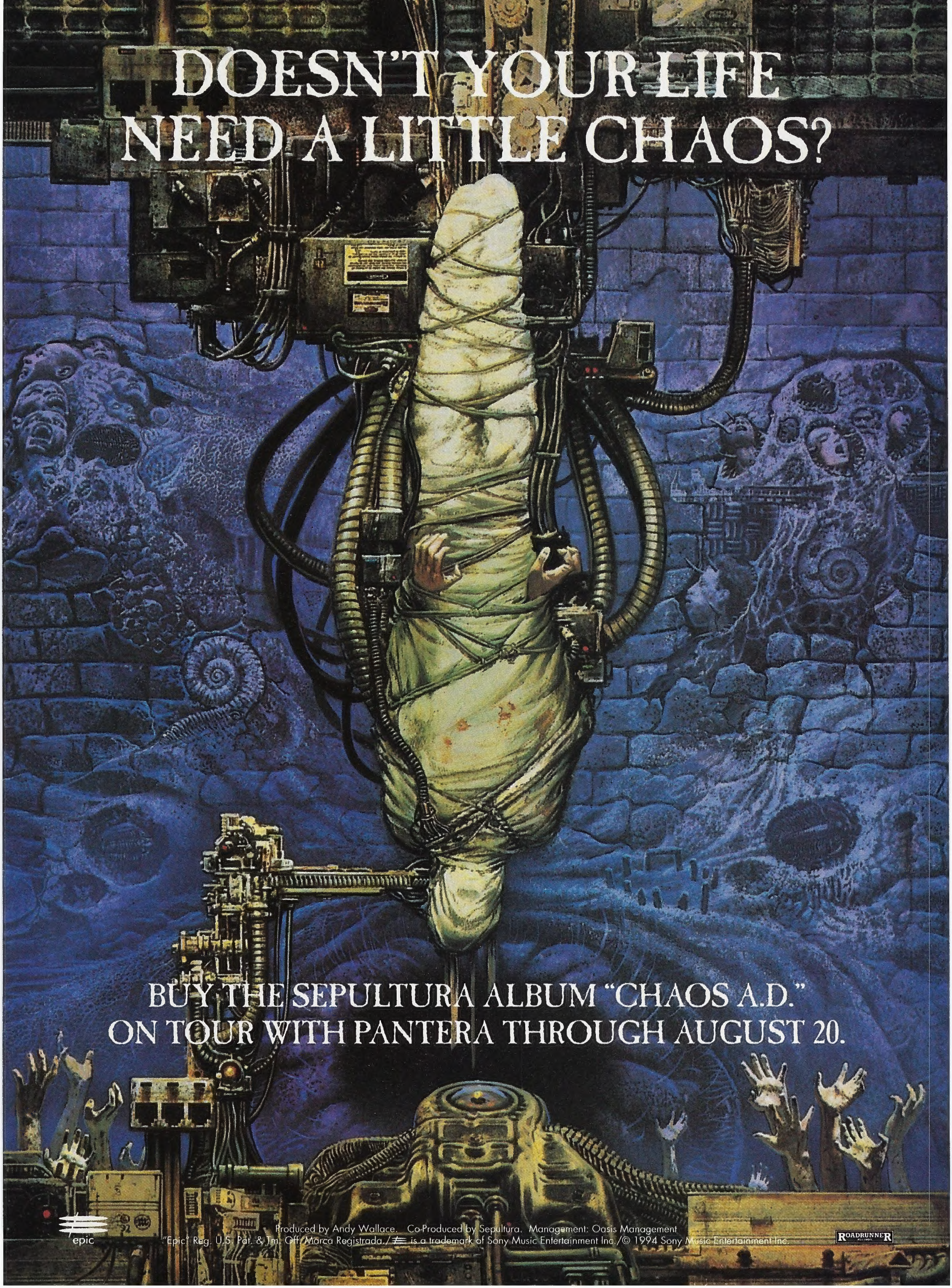

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ROADRUNNER

STATIC

CLAY DECKER

What's your GAME?

In the Seventies, Kiss and Ted Nugent each had pinball machines that celebrated their massive popularity. In the Eighties, the members of Journey starred in an arcade video game in which players had to get the band to an arena—God only knows what that celebrated. And now, a new pinball machine gives arcade-goers the chance to take a tilt at Guns N' Roses.

"It's awesome, man," says Slash. "I've been hands-on with every stage of this project—I have the original plans drawn out on napkins." The Guns N' Roses pinball project was hatched during a less-than-thrilling sojourn at the guitarist's uncle-in-law's home, which houses a vast collection of rec-room pinball machines. "After that, I bought my wife one," says Slash. "And the next thing you know, I've got like 14 or 15 pinball machines!"

Inspired by his new hobby, Slash decided that the time had come to build his own machine. Armed with a headfull of ideas, he approached video game developers Data East to help him realize his vision.

"It's the loudest machine ever made," he says. "Me and the guys from Data East went into the studio and pulled out all our old masters, stripped them down and sampled them. This is the first machine to ever use real drums, bass and guitars." And as if that weren't enough, "once you've completed all the different modes, you have a six-ball multiball in which each ball represents a guy in the band. It's really cool."

—TOM BEAUJOUR

The Mask

If you like eyes that can pop three feet out of someone's head or hearts that can beat through chests, then *The Mask* should be your movie of choice this summer. Based on the popular Dark Horse comic title, *The Mask* (due out July 29) centers on an ancient, mysterious mask with supernatural properties. Whoever dons the mask—in this case, a mild-mannered bank clerk—is transformed into an indestructible lunatic, hell-bent on commiting acts of outrageous violence and extraordinary lunacy—sorta like Tonya Harding. The star of the film is *In Living Color*'s elastic funnyman Jim Carrey, best known as the pyro-happy "Fire Marshall Bill" and "Ace Ventura, Pet Detective."

FLUX QUOTE: "The man I'm playing was murdered; the woman he loved was raped and then murdered. And he has to come back to settle the score.... I truly feel that if I were in the same situation, I would do the same thing." — Brandon Lee on The Crow, Entertainment Weekly

The Terrible Twos

When it comes to image, former Judas Priest singer Rob Halford has a "leg up" on the competition. Featured prominently on both of his lower limbs are giant tattoos of the sinister stars of *Alien* and *Predator*.

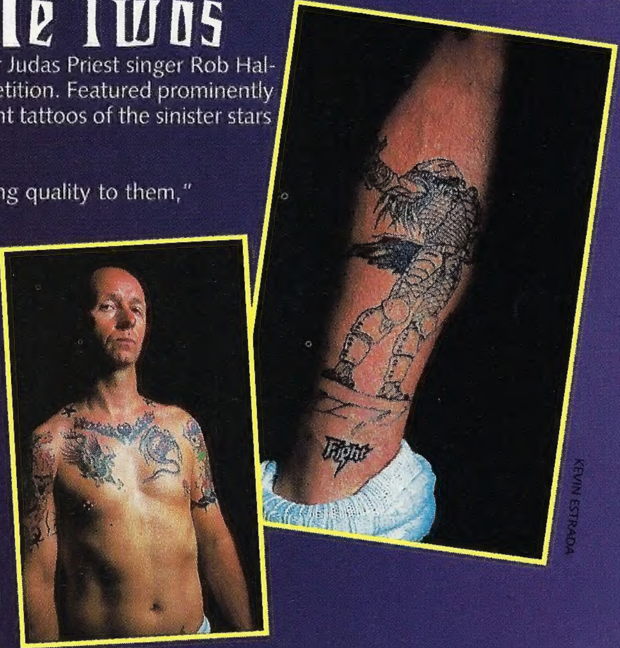
Why the gruesome twosome?

"These creatures have an appealing quality to them," says Halford, whose latest heavy metal project is called Fight. "They're practically indestructible and have a truly voracious appetite for consuming every living thing around them.

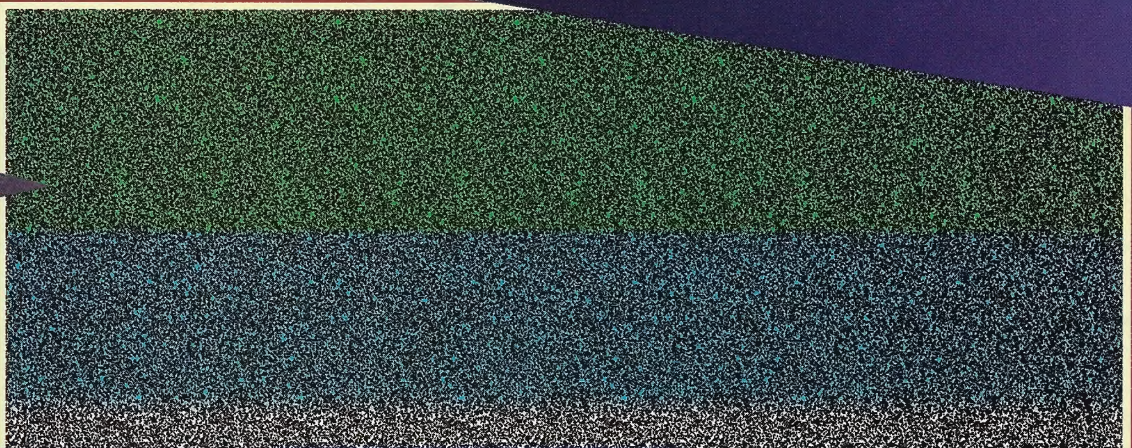
"It's strange because, in the films, the Alien and the Predator are truly horrible monsters, but you can still identify with them. You wish *you* could be that powerful."

As for Halford's future tattoo plans, he is currently considering the Marvel comic book vigilante, *The Punisher*.

"I'm running out of skin," says Halford. "I hope I can find room for it." [*laughs*]



KEVIN ESTRADA



MIKE CHATHAM

The Next Big Thing: Stereograms

It looks like a pile of multi-colored jellybean vomit, but it's actually a stereogram. These puzzles contain hidden 3-D images and words, and are quickly becoming the rage among non-video gaming enthusiasts. To view our special Flux stereogram, hold the page against your nose, then slowly move the image away from you. Do it right, and you could uncover the meaning of life.

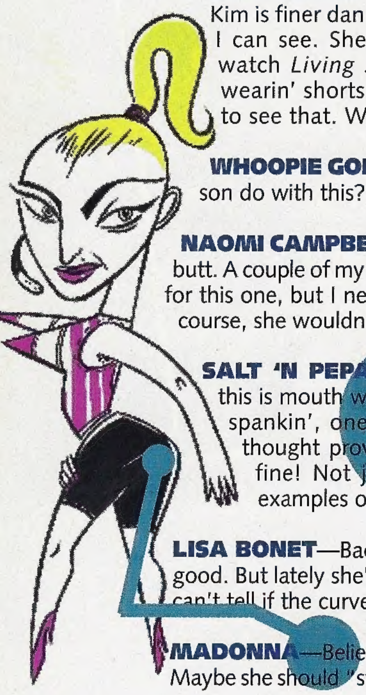
STATIC

Butt MaN

MIX IS HIS NAME AND BUTTS ARE HIS GAME

Seattle rapper Sir Mix-A-Lot is *the* authority on female butts (Remember "Baby Got Back?") Wide butts, small butts, curvey butts, high butts, droopy butts, soft butts, firm butts, butts so big they need two seats on the plane—oh yeah, our man Mix knows all there is about the many varieties of booty. So when Flux decided to assemble the ultimate guide to celebrity butts, we went straight to the top dog and asked him to rate the following cabooses. Read on, and bow to the master of rear mud flaps.

JANET JACKSON—I like "Rhythm Nation" booty better than "That's The Way Love Goes" booty, but you know me, I love the thickness. It still looks good anyway. I mean, it's not like I would say no. Janet sure is lookin' good on the top half lately. Just when I'm trying to lay off the dairy products.



MIKE GORMAN

KIM FIELDS—This ain't no damn Tooty—this is *booty*! Kim is finer dan a muh fuh. The body is perfect from what I can see. She's the main reason most of my homies watch *Living Single*. Somebody let me know if she's wearin' shorts in any episode because I'd stop banging to see that. Well, I may be exaggerating a little bit.

WHOOPIE GOLDBERG—What in the hell could Ted Danson do with this? Nice n' round. It's good she left him.

NAOMI CAMPBELL—Love the lips. Hate the butt. A couple of my white friends think I'm crazy for this one, but I need more juice than that. Of course, she wouldn't like my fat ass, either.

SALT 'N PEPA—Mmm Mmm good! Now this is mouth waterin', lip smackin', monkey spankin', one knee beggin', pole raisin', thought provokin', Mack Daddy shockin' fine! Not just ass...ATTITUDE. Perfect examples of Soul Sista-ism. Y'all stay fine.

LISA BONET—Back in the early Cosby days it looked hella good. But lately she's been wearing big baggy ass pants, so I can't tell if the curve is still poppin'.

MADONNA—Believe it not, I've never seen Madonna's butt. Maybe she should "strike the pose" so I can do some research.

TONYA HARDING—Her butt's nice, and yes, I've been looking. The press can't make me not like this butt. My pole is ready to beat this up. I really liked it when her skate broke during the Olympics and she put her leg up on the judge's table.

NANCY KERRIGAN—Get the hell out of here. I'm an ass judge, not a sweet-little-skating-princess judge. I don't like her butt.

EN VOGUE—All their butts look good and they know it. Round Mounds of Get Down. They flaunt it, but they don't give it up. Yeah, make 'em work for it, baby. Damn, y'all look *gooooood*.

QUEEN LATIFAH—Never seen it, so I can't comment. But she is a hell of a business woman. Much props to da Queen!

ANNA NICOLE SMITH—About time! A Guess model with some curves! I thought the only place I'd see curvy women are in porno flicks or my house. Love it.

TINA TURNER—When is gravity gonna affect this woman? I've never peeped the butt, but I love the legs. Don't let some pervert's beard scrape 'em all up, Tina. Definitely a candidate for legs of the year.

VANESSA WILLIAMS—Vanessa is fine, but her butt's entirely too small for my big ass. This is another one my white friends will yell at me about.

MIKE GORMAN

ROSIE PEREZ—I saw the queen in *Do The Right Thing* and believe me, I was sprung. For once in my life I wanted to be a piece of ice. I'd pay Rosie just to cus me out. I love a woman with a mouthful of four-letter words.

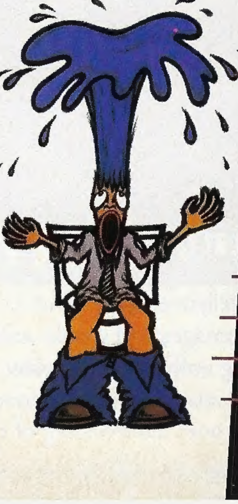
OPRAH—When she's a size 10/11, I love it. A lot of so-called comedians won't admit it, but when she knocks the weight off, she looks good. Plus, she's rich as hell.

DIANA ROSS—My mom would kick my ass if I rated Diana Ross' butt, so I'm gonna leave this one alone. She's still fine, though.

SHARON STONE—I didn't know Sharon Stone had a butt. She ain't happening up top either. Too flat, too small.

REBECCA DE MORNAY—Who the hell is Rebecca De Mornay?

Don't ever do this:



KEVIN HENSON

NEVER send each of your friends to a different bathroom at your school. And don't tell them to turn on all the faucets, wait, and then flush all the toilets at the same time. The architects that designed the plumbing system in your school probably didn't expect every toilet to be flushed simultaneously—and pipes can only hold so much water before exploding.

America's Least Wanted

Video games have not only become an entertainment phenomenon—they've also become Hollywood's dumping ground for unwanted talent. If you've been wondering where some former TV and movie stars have been hiding lately, chances are they're currently trying to regain some of their long-lost popularity in a full-motion Sega CD or PC CD-ROM game. Here's a few of the recent "I-used-to-be-a-celebrity" sightings in video gameland.

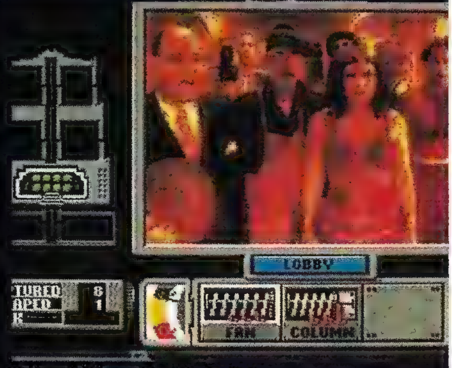
1) KIRK CAMERON—The squeeky-voiced juvenile delinquent star of *Growing Pains* dons a medieval costume, grabs a big sword and performs the Heimlich Maneuver like a pro in the new Crystal Dynamics 3DO/PC CD-ROM game, *The Horde*.

2) MARGOT KIDDER—The gravel-voiced actress who played ace reporter Lois Lane in the *Superman* film series stars in Access Software's new PC CD-ROM thriller, *Under A Killing Moon*.

3) DEBORAH HARRY/COREY HAIM—The breathy-voiced singer of Blondie and the whiny-voiced hero of *The Lost Boys* both appear in the recent Sega CD game, *Double Switch*.

4) DANA PLATO—The nerdy-voiced star of *Diff'rent Strokes*/Playboy nudie model/Hollywood-starlet-gone-bad strips down to her skivvies in the controversial Sega CD game, *Night Trap*.

Kirk Cameron: The Horde



Deborah Harry: Double Switch

NINTENDO: FIRST BLOOD

Say it ain't so! Nintendo, the company that swore on Mario's life that none of their games would ever, ever, ever feature "random, gratuitous and/or excessive violence" or "graphic illustration of death" plans to let the SNES version of *Mortal Kombat II* fly with as much blood and as many fatalities as the Sega version—and they've hired the Butthole Surfers as their new spokesmen! Hypocrites or not, you decide—it's just great to hear Nintendo executives say the word "butthole."

bAbewatch

* REBECCA GAYHEART (THE NOXEMA GIRL)

MICHAEL SAYWORD

* TIFFANI (PUKE) AMBER THIESSEN (*SAVED BY THE BELL'S* KELLY KAPOWSKI)

*ERIN GRAY (*BUCK ROGERS'* COLONEL WILMA DEARING)

Let's Make A Fake ID!

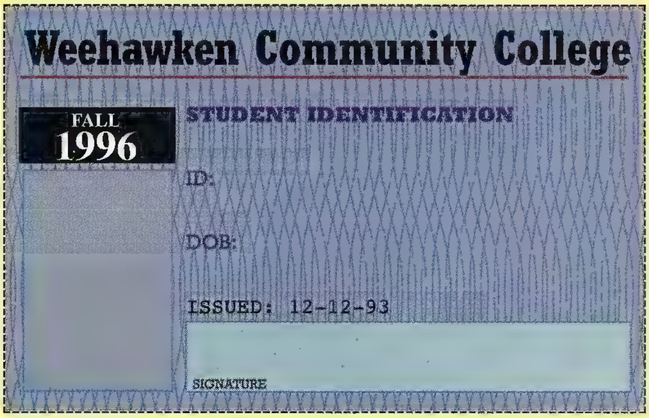
MATERIALS NEEDED:

Scissors
Paste
Passport photo
Typewriter
Laminating materials
Videotape

STEP 1. Go to your local Woolworths and have your picture taken in one of those automatic photo booths. While you're there, check to see if they have any laminating materials—that's the two pieces of sticky clear plastic that will give your ID that hard, legitimate look.

STEP 2. Carefully cut out the accompanying card along the dotted lines. Insert the card into the typewriter and type in all your vital statistics. (For "ID," use any 9 numbers.) Make sure you use one of those good, computer-type typewriters. And be reasonable—no one's going to believe you were born in 1950!

STEP 3. The photo machine should have given you at least three pictures. Cut out the worst-looking one and put it aside. Take the other two, write "I love you" on the back, and give them to your mom. This should soften the blow if forget to take your new ID out of your pocket and she discovers it the next time she does the laundry. Paste your photo on the card in the space provided. (You might have to trim it a bit.)



Weehawken Community College

FALL
1996

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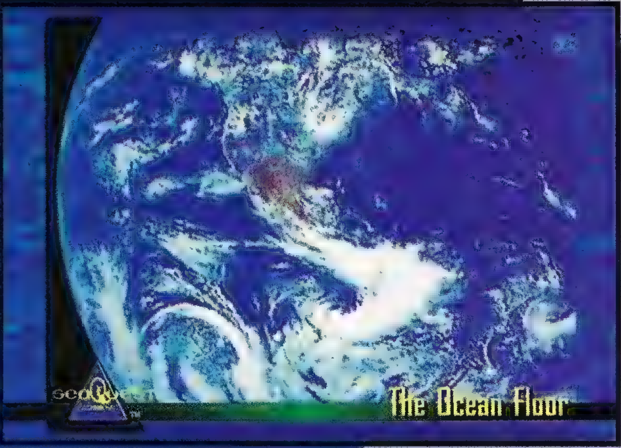
SIGNATURE

CONTINUED

STATIC

BOGUS CARD OF THE MONTH



Card #93 in Skybox's *SeaQuest* series was somehow given the title "The Ocean Floor." The ocean floor? Do you see any fish, any plantlife, any divers being caught in a shark feeding frenzy? Of course you don't (those things are difficult to see from *outer space*!). A better title would have been "The United States From Very Very Very Very Far

CYBERFORCE BENDABLES

A top-quality collection of bendable figures based on the hit comic book *Cyber Force* will be available this August from Top Cow Productions. The set will consist of four *Cyber Force* characters—Impact, Stryker, Ripclaw and Cyblade (not pictured). Each figure will come with its own mini-comic featuring original artwork, as well as a trading card for that character. Cost for each figure will

BMXcruciating PAIN!

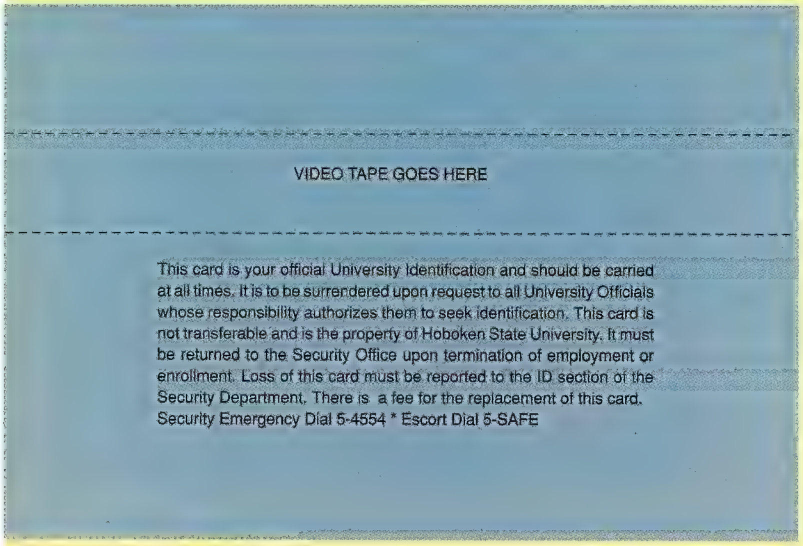
BEFORE MOUNTING THAT MOUNTAIN BIKE, cyclists should be aware of some rather *stiff* penalties. According to the Journal Of Urology's May/June issue, biking can be hazardous to men's genitalia. The Boston University Medical Center recounts some disturbing bicycle accidents (most involve that blasted horizontal support bar) that damaged blood vessels in the groin area, making erections impossible—or (better yet) permanent. In other words, your Schwinn can seriously affect your schwing.

FAKE I.D.

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

STEP 4. Grab an old video that you don't care about (your sister's Barney tapes will do), and cut out a 3 1/2-inch strip of tape. Glue this tape across the back of the card.

STEP 5. Use the laminating materials to put a hard coating of plastic around your new ID. If you can't find any at your local Woolworths or stationary store, go to Kinko's or Pip Printing—they usually have laminating machines.

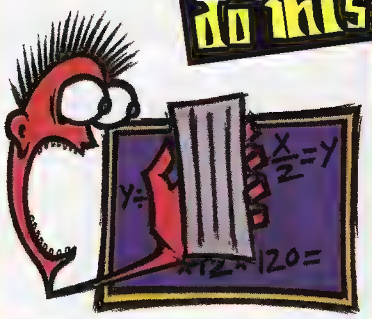


VIDEO TAPE GOES HERE

This card is your official University Identification and should be carried at all times. It is to be surrendered upon request to all University Officials whose responsibility authorizes them to seek identification. This card is not transferable and is the property of Hoboken State University. It must be returned to the Security Office upon termination of employment or enrollment. Loss of this card must be reported to the ID section of the Security Department. There is a fee for the replacement of this card. Security Emergency Dial 5-4554 * Escort Dial 5-SAFE

STEP 6. Voila! You're done! Now you can show off your new fake ID to all your friends. But remember, carrying false identification is unethical and probably illegal in most states. So don't try to use this ID to get in to dirty movies, apply for credit cards, aquire a bank loan, or register to vote. And certainly don't try to buy beer with it.

Don't ever do this:



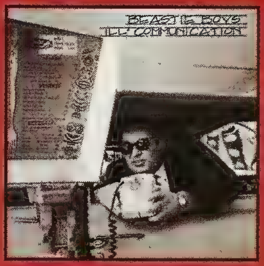
KEVIN HENSON

Don't take a white Crayon, roll it in chalk dust, and place it in the chalk tray. The teacher will be very angry when he tries to erase the blackboard

ILL. COMMUNICATION

BEASTIE BOYS

Featuring "Get It Together," "Sabotage" and "Sure Shot"


BEASTIE BOYS
ILL COMMUNICATION

On Tour Now

Produced by Beastie Boys & Mario Caldato, Jr.

© 1994 Capitol Records, Inc.

ALEX MCKNIGHT

Road Rash

If your 3DO player, new as it may be, is already collecting dust from the lack of quality software, then the recent release of Electronic Arts' *Road Rash* for the super-expensive, super-hyped CD-based interactive machine might just be the kick-in-the-butt the system needs. The high-speed motorcycle racing/combat game, which became a huge hit on the Sega Genesis 16-bit platform, has been significantly reworked and enhanced on the 32-bit 3DO system. *Road Rash* for 3DO offers some truly intense, rubber-burnin' asphalt action—and two full-screen music videos from alternative bands Swervedriver ("Duel") and Paw ("Jessie"). In addition, the game comes packed with a separate A&M Records audio disc which includes music from Soundgarden ("Outshined," "Rusty Cage," "Badmotorfinger," "Superunknown"), Therapy? ("Teethgrinder," "Auto Surgery"), Monster Magnet ("Dinosaur Vacume"), Hammerbox ("Trip," "Simple Passing"), Swervedriver ("Duel," "Last Train To Satansville") and Paw ("Jessie," "The Bridge," "Pansy").

home Alone

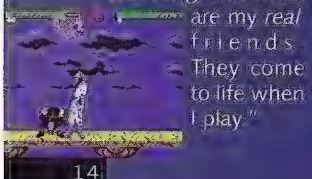
"I can't live without my games," says Morbid Angel guitarist Trey Azagthoth. "When I'm not talking to the fans or jamming on stage, I'm on the tour bus playing video games. I don't think there's anyone on earth that enjoys games as much as I do."

The death metal virtuoso owns a SNES, Genesis, NES, TurboGrafx and an IBM PC—so he's more than qualified to comment on the ongoing battle between the SNES and Genesis 16-bit systems.

"The Genesis definitely has a few good games, but most of them lack the sound and graphics of SNES carts. For example, *Streets Of Rage 2* is supposed to be such a great fighting game, but to me it's just a bunch of hype. The punching sounds are poor and the characters are fuzzy. SNES's *Brawl Brothers* just smokes *Streets Of Rage 2*. Overall, SNES carts are usually a better value."

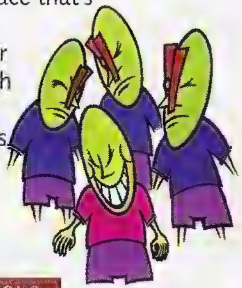
Azagthoth's current list of cool games include: *Brawl Brothers* (SNES), *Road Rash 2* (Genesis), *Final Fight 2* (SNES), *Contra* (SNES), *Biohazard Battle* (Genesis), *Lightening Force* (Genesis), *Super Black Bass* (SNES) and *R-Type* (Turbo Grafix).

Although he's a self-proclaimed video game freak, don't look for Azagthoth in the arcades. "I don't like society, and I don't like people," he says. "I live in my own world, and people like Chun Li, Slippy The Frog and Maki are my *real* friends. They come to life when I play."



Don't ever do this:

The rectangular tiles that make up most school ceilings conceal a small crawl space that's great for hiding things. But never throw a dead fish up there. It'll take them weeks to discover where the smell is coming from.



KEVIN HENSON

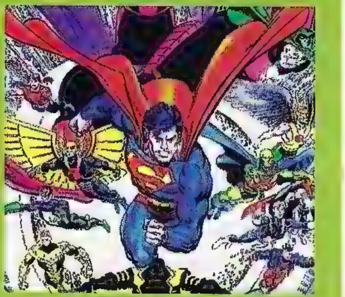
Zero Hour Approaches

Years ago, DC Comics screwed up its stories so badly that many of it's comics' plotlines required major surgery—which they received in the form of *Crisis On Infinite Earths*, a miniseries that redirected all of the company's series, established new origins for some characters and killed off others, like the Barry Allen Flash and Supergirl.

Well, they've screwed things up all over again.

So DC will make yet another attempt to get things straight with *Zero Hour: Crisis In Time*. This miniseries, out in July, will crossover into each of the company's titles in order to bring some continuity to DC's universe. You'll see things you never thought possible: Batgirl *running* (heh, heh) around Gotham City, Jor-El and Lara returning Superman to a Krypton that *never* exploded... You get the idea.

Zero Hour also promises the deaths of several well-known superheroes and the introduction of a slew of new ones. Though perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the miniseries will be that every DC universe August release will be numbered zero to reflect the new status quo and provide new readers the chance to jump on without playing catch-up.



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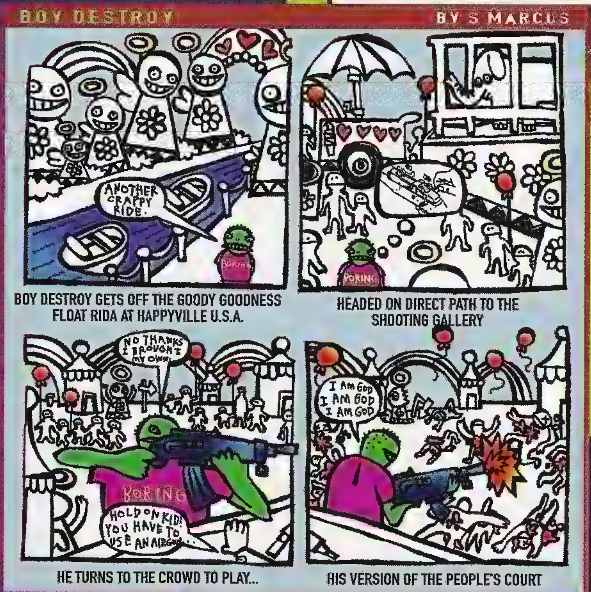

ANOTHER CRAPPY RIDE.
BORING
BORING
NO THANKS I BROUGHT MY OWN.
BORING
HOLD ON KID! YOU HAVE TO USE AN AIRGUN...
I AM GOD I AM GOD I AM GOD

BOY DESTROY GETS OFF THE GOODY GOODNESS FLOAT RIDA AT HAPPYVILLE U.S.A.

HEADED ON DIRECT PATH TO THE SHOOTING GALLERY

HE TURNS TO THE CROWD TO PLAY...

HIS VERSION OF THE PEOPLE'S COURT

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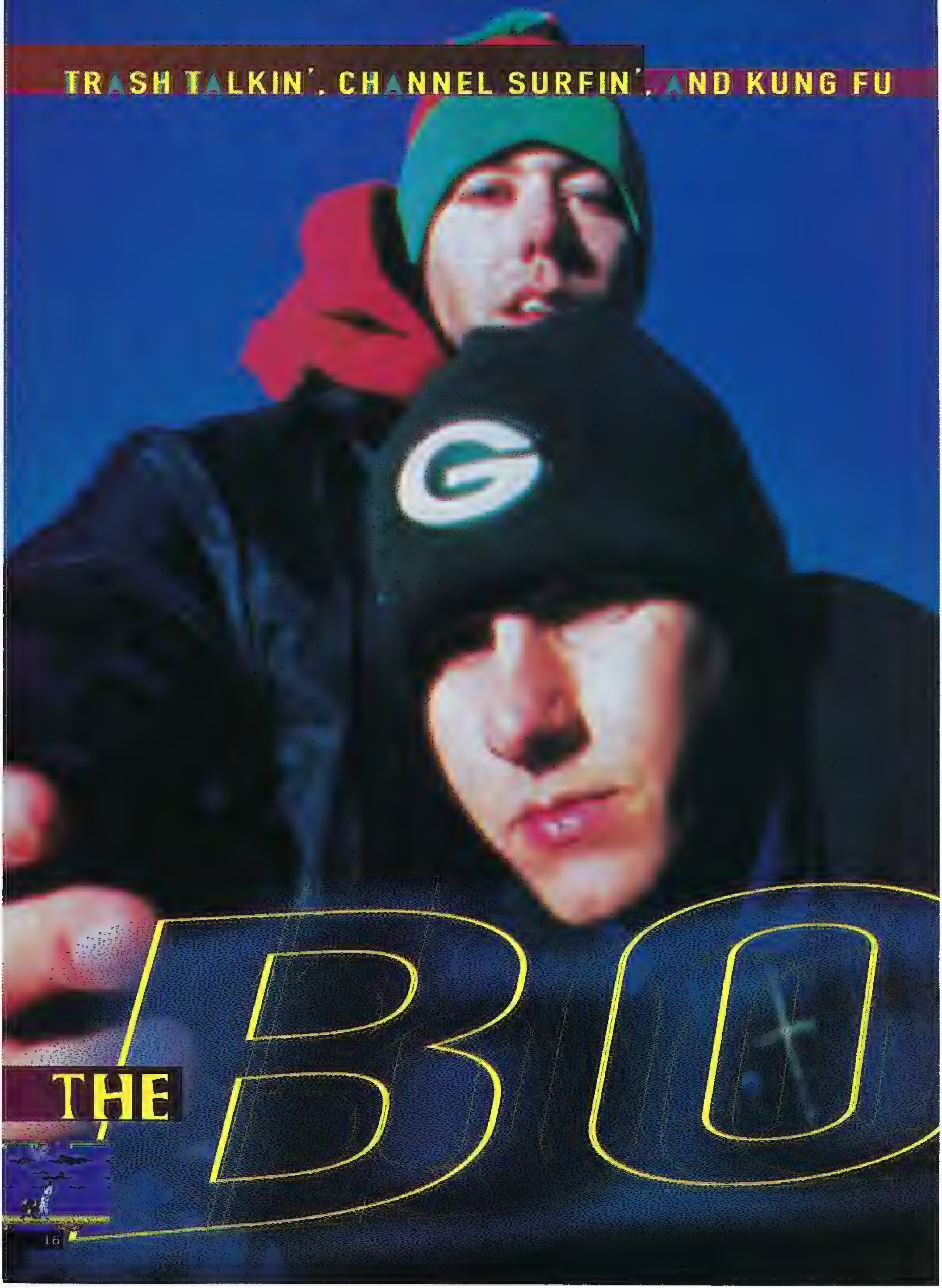
TRASH TALKIN', CHANNEL SURFIN', AND KUNG FU

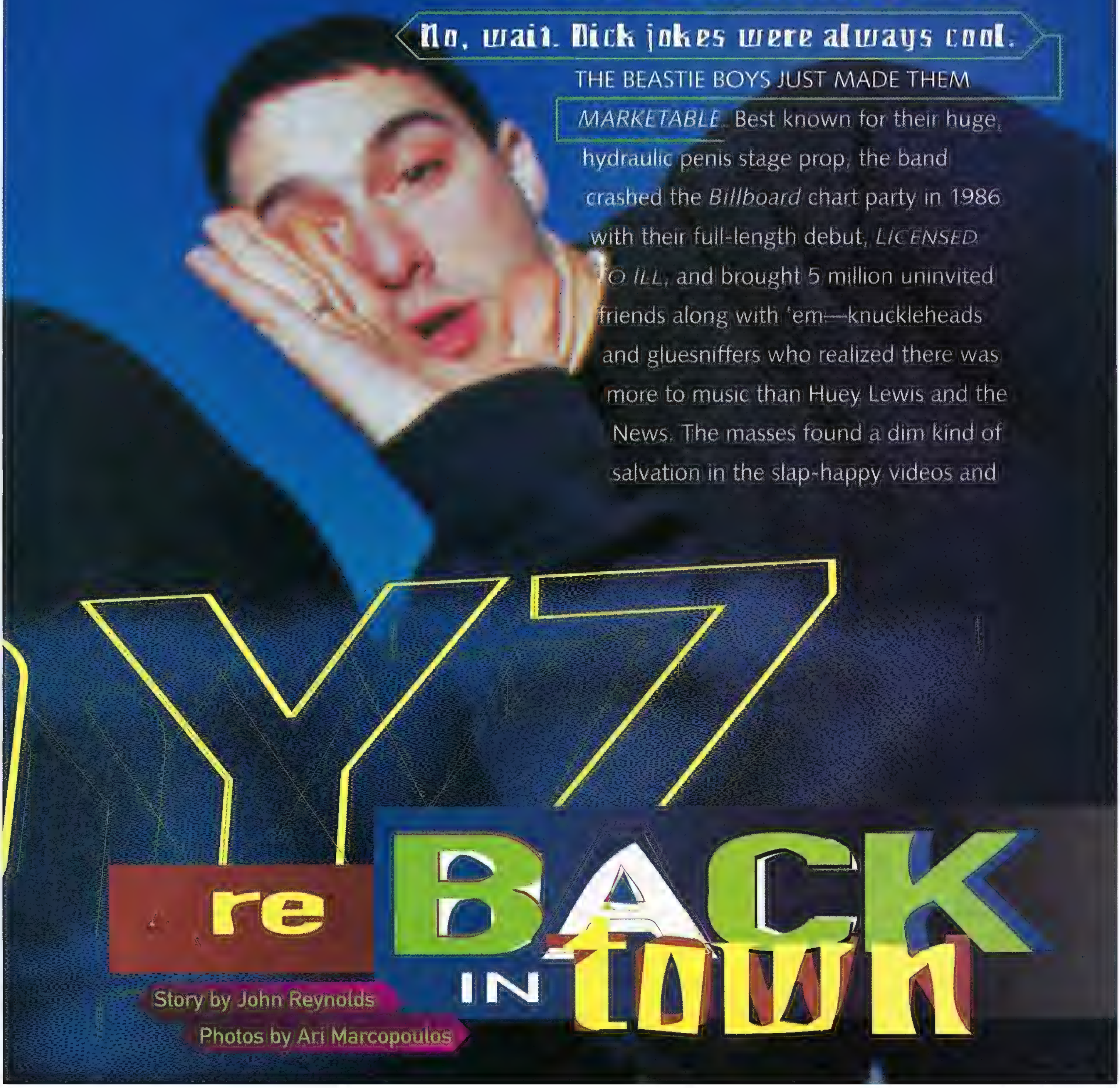


THE BO

FIGHTIN' WITH KING ADROC AND THE BEASTIE BOYS

Before Beavis and Butt head made dick jokes cool, there were the BEASTIES.

No, wait. Dick jokes were always cool.



THE BEASTIE BOYS JUST MADE THEM *MARKETABLE*. Best known for their huge, hydraulic penis stage prop, the band crashed the *Billboard* chart party in 1986 with their full-length debut, *LICENSED TO ILL*, and brought 5 million uninvited friends along with 'em—knuckleheads and gluesniffers who realized there was more to music than Huey Lewis and the News. The masses found a dim kind of salvation in the slap-happy videos and

YZ re BACK IN town

Story by John Reynolds

Photos by Ari Marcopoulos

WHY CAN'T I DRINK BEER

no-brain refrains of "Fight for Your Right (To Party)" and "No Sleep 'Til Brooklyn."

Since then, the Beasties have, um, *grown up*. They've become real *musicians*. But, like a really bad yearbook photo, *Licensed To Ill* just keeps on popping up. "I don't need to hear 'No Sleep Til Brooklyn' again," says Beastie Adam "Adroc" Horovitz. "Everybody acts like a knucklehead when they're in high school, and most people can deny and hide their past. But when you sell 5 million albums, that *is* your past, and everybody knows it. What are you gonna do?"

Well, the Beasties tried to cover their tracks with *Paul's Boutique*—a scatterbrained, skate-friendly followup to *Licensed*, a commercial flop so challenging that it effectively scared off all of the fake-ass "fans" who only scored the Beasties for their novelty value.

As a result, the band was left with a smaller-but-cooler audience: the behaviorally challenged devotees who'd hooked the Beastie line before *Licensed* hit the streets with early releases like their ridiculous "Cookie Puss" single and the hardcore punk EP *Pollywog Stew* (both of which were re-released earlier this year as *Some Old Bullshit*).

Then, three years later, they pumped out *Check Your Head*, a magically delicious mess of Seventies soul grooves, pothead rock and hardcore nostalgia trips, recorded predominantly with live instruments *which the Beasties actually played*! Even dickhead critics and Trent Reznor zombies liked it.

At about this time, the Beastie Boys started their own record company—Grand Royal, home of Luscious Jackson—and published a fanzine of the same name. Mike D got into the fashion business. Adroc married superfine actress Ione Skye, and embarked on his own acting career. MCA—the other Adam, Adam Yauch—developed more than a passing fascination with Buddhism. Once widely thought to be one-dimensional goofballs, 1992 was the year the Beasties proved themselves to be many-faceted, *renaissance* goofballs—inspired and limitless, both musically and personally.

The Beastie Boys' latest release is called *Ill Communication*, and, by Horovitz's own admission, it's "like, the same thing" as *Check Your Head*—thank God. **Flux** recently caught up with Horovitz for a two-hour gab about kung fu films, the sporting life, going on tour as part of Lollapalooza '94, and—when it occurred to him—his music. Talking with Horovitz was very difficult, as the man has no attention span and a train of thought about as smooth and stable as the one in *The Fugitive*. Plus he was watching a Knicks game at the time. That's okay. He's cool. Twenty-seven years old and still a knucklehead. Long live the Beasties!

FLUX: Yauch said on "MTV Sports" that he'd challenge any band to the stuff they do on "American Gladiators." Have there been any takers?

ADAM HOROVITZ: Uh, yeah. We're having a big battle with the Counting Crows right now. That's the band with the song that goes, "Mmm, mmm, mmm, mmm." What's with them?

FLUX: On the new album, the song "B-Boys Makin' With The Freak Freak" has a lot of golf references. Is this a new Beastie pastime?

HOROVITZ: Everybody plays golf now. Well, not me—but everybody else is down with it. I can see its appeal in a way. There's a course that's near where we live that's like... Wait, what just happened? Oh, they got him on traveling.

FLUX: What about Mike and MCA? Are they big golfers?

HOROVITZ: Just Mike. He's, like, die-hard now. He's *crazy* for golf. You know, Michael Jordan plays. I don't know what the story is with golf. Everybody out here's into it, all the Xtra Large kids are playing golf.

FLUX: Are you ever going to bring the giant, hydraulic penis back into the stage act?

HOROVITZ: Actually, somebody stole it.

FLUX: You mean some guy has it hanging on the wall of his rec room?

HOROVITZ: [*laughs*] I don't know. It was in a warehouse in Jersey somewhere. It's in this big box and you'd press the hydraulics and... Oh, shit. Damn, I love the Knicks. Whoa, what the hell did he just do? He threw the ball into the crowd!

FLUX: "Sure Shot," off the new album, has a line where Mike D says, "You say I'm twentysomething and I should be slacking." The media is all over this slacker thing, and the Beasties are sort of slacker icons. What's your take on that?

HOROVITZ: There have been slackers throughout all generations of time. I think the last generation, the one between us and our parents, the Eighties people, were all fucked up. They were so business-minded and closed-minded in the Eighties; but the Nineties are different, and it upsets them. The Nineties aren't like the Sixties, and they're definitely not the Seventies—and they're *definitely* not the fucking Eighties, you know? Adults are pissed, I guess, and they say, "Ah, those kids are no good, lazy..." It's the same shit they always say. But kids in every generation are considered slackers. That's what kids are—that's what *we* are. I think it's just an unavoidable process of human growth. Kids are bums, and that's the way

ADROCK

it should be. It's like, "Leave me alone. Why can't I drink beer and have a good time?" Oh, shit, you know what movie just came on? *Once Upon A Time In The West*. This is a *dope* movie.

FLUX: I've heard you guys are into kung fu movies now.

HOROVITZ: Now? We've always been into kung fu. Jackie Chan's cool, but just get Bruce Lee. He's the man, no question.

FLUX: Do you consider yourself an expert on the subject of kung fu films?

HOROVITZ: Not at all. I just used to watch them. Every Saturday morning they had Abbott and Costello, and every Sunday they had kung fu movies. I just always watched `em.

FLUX: And now everybody's into these movies.

HOROVITZ: It's the same thing with Pumas. Everybody's wearing Pumas now. It's like we never left the fifth grade.

FLUX: What do you look for in a kung fu movie?

HOROVITZ: Like, when the guy is standing there fighting, and he looks around real quick and jumps and does a triple-flip and lands on top of the building that he's standing next to. That shit is funny. But yo, there are these dope movies called *A Chinese Ghost Story*. They made three of them, and they're not like regular karate movies. They're like these crazy, crazy movies. They're hard to find, but they have 'em in some video stores.

FLUX: Are they horror movies?

HOROVITZ: They're kind of like horror movies, yeah, but they're just ill. You should check `em out. They're called *A Chinese Ghost Story*.

FLUX: When it comes to your music, would you rather have the respect of the hiphop community or the alternative community?

HOROVITZ: We actually don't get respect from anybody, but I would rather have hiphop than alternative 'cause I hate that word. I'm not down with alternative music. The stuff they label "alternative music" is pop music. Hiphop right now is also pop music, which is kind of funny.

Alternative music is supposed to be punk rock, and hiphop is supposed to be underground and nobody should want to deal with it, but both those styles are huge, selling millions of records.

FLUX: So what's underground now? Rave?

HOROVITZ: [*sighs*] Unfortunately, yeah. I'm not really big on the rave scene or the techno scene.

AND HAVE A GOOD TIME?

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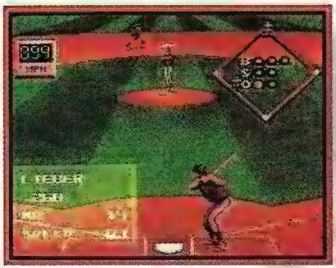

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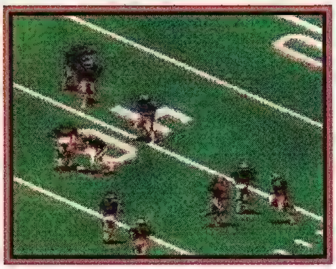

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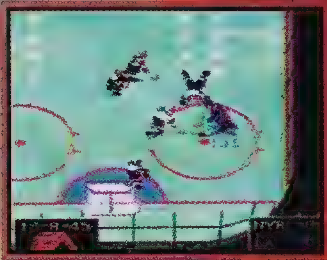

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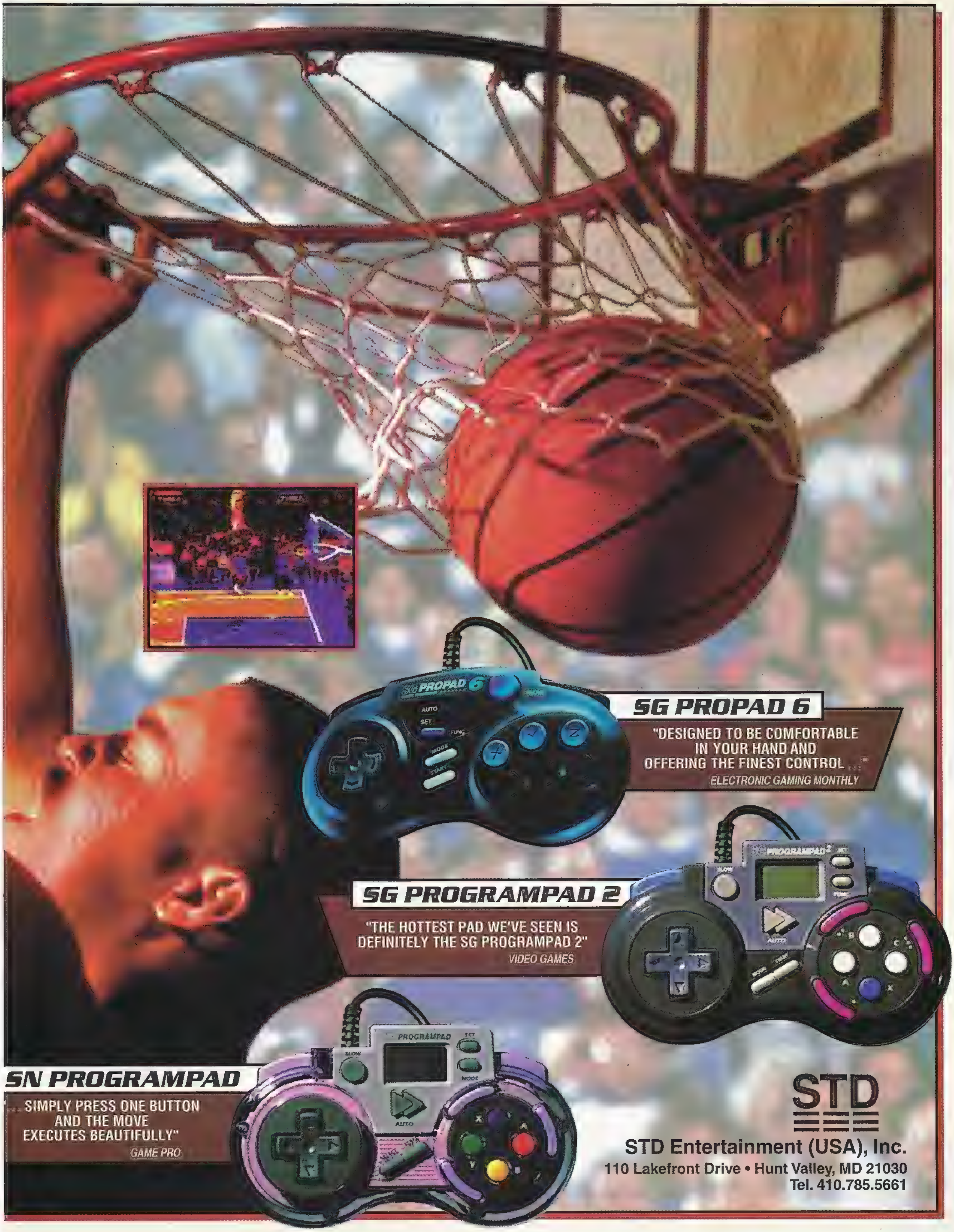

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FLUX: Have you been to a rave?

HOROVITZ: Yeah, you know, whatever. I have problems with just the music itself. I say "heck no" to techno. I give it a harder time than it deserves because I don't ever listen to it unless I'm forced to.

FLUX: There's a line from "Professor Booty" where Mike D says, "Life ain't nothin' but a good groove/A good mix tape to put you in the right mood." *Check Your Head* and *Ill Communication* have sort of a mix-tape feel about them.

HOROVITZ: Actually, we have a lot of mix-tape battles. I don't mean to pat myself on the back, but I'm pretty good on the pause button. No CDs, none of that, and you can't use a mixer—either tape to tape, or record to tape. Well, you can use a mixer, but it's much better to make break beats from the pause button, 'cause that's where the skill comes in... Oh shit, Racquel Welch just smashed this guy in the head with a rifle. Wait, that's not Racquel Welch...

FLUX: Tell us about the best mix tape you ever made.

HOROVITZ: I don't know, there's a lot of shit on there. There's this classic thing by a group called Back Door, a dope Seventies jazz trio. It's just the funkiest, funkiest song, and it's only two minutes long, which is perfect pause-tape material 'cause you can't have anything that's too long. Usually a good mix tape has some James Brown on it, 'cause he's the master. And a Richard Pryor joke is always good. "Stand Up," a song by Minor Threat, is also really good for a mix tape. Just styles, all kinds of styles. And "Under Me Slang Tang," the old reggae groove from the Eighties that goes [*sings*] "duh duh duh-duh duh." It's a classic one. It's never played out, 'cause every time you hear it you get happy.

Y'know, I don't like CDs. They make me really angry. I'm trading in all of my CDs. I have like 250 CDs and I'm getting rid of all of them. I'm just fed up, and I feel like making a statement. I've been pushed too far. I'm stuck in the past, I can't help it. You know, if I want to break my Kiss record, I'll feel free to break my Kiss record. What's up with that? Why did everybody break their Kiss *Alive II* records?

FLUX: Who did that?

HOROVITZ: Everybody I know broke their *Alive II* records. I mean, I didn't, but everybody broke their Kiss records when they got over Kiss back in, like, sixth grade. Right in junior high, people just hated Kiss. Maybe it was the disco song that pissed everybody off.

FLUX: I didn't know that you had Kiss in your past.

HOROVITZ: Who doesn't? What white, 27-year-old kid doesn't have Kiss in their past? I'm into Kiss. I mean, I'm not, but I am.

FLUX: Maybe people will feel the same way about the Beastie Boys in ten years, and they'll start breaking your records.

HOROVITZ: We just need makeup.

FLUX: Do you think the Beastie Boys have become trailblazers in the fashion world?

HOROVITZ: Yeah. Our new look is gonna be crazy, though. You haven't seen it? At Macy's, Bloomingdales? [*laughs*] You know, we have no new look. It's funny because it's the Nineties, but I still wear the exact same clothes that I wore back in fifth grade. Isn't that crazy? Oh, I saw the funniest thing. Remember last year when everybody wore the platform Pumas and the platform Adidas? I was at Barney's in Beverly Hills `cause my wife wanted to go—you know how the ladies are with the clothes. I'm not trying to say anything, you know, we just wanted to check out the look. We didn't buy anything. I'm not even disrespecting Barney's. But this old lady is walking by with one of these $4,000 beige outfits on, and she's got fake Adidas shell-toes with, like, a heel. Like high-heeled Adidas sneakers! Not even platforms, *high heels*. And she's got the tacky make-up and the whole old, Beverly-Hills-lady look. Yo, I was dying off of this lady, it was so funny.

FLUX: What happens when the flannel look falls by the wayside and people start wearing skinny ties and new-wave clothes again? Are you guys gonna be able to roll with the changes?

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HOROVITZ: You know what? Skinny ties, for real, are coming back big. New wave is so big right now. This is something me and Mike were talking about. Every new wave person is afraid to break out the skinny tie, and we want these people to know that it's okay to come out with the skinny ties. You should look like The Knack. Oh my God, oh man, they were just doing an eye operation on TV. I got cable now.

Hey, did you ever see, like, in the early 1920s, they had these old Flash Gordon movies and shit like that? Don't you think that it's weird that they knew what the future was going to look like? Like, you see all these vans now that look like spaceships. How did they know that it was going to look like that? All the little watch computers and the TVs. Pretty soon, you're gonna have the Jetsons shit, where you can look at a screen and talk to somebody.

FLUX: Maybe the people who invent all that stuff now just watched a lot of Jetsons when they were kids.

HOROVITZ: Yeah, seriously, you might be right... You know, this can't be *Once Upon A Time In The West* because Kris Kristofferson's on the screen right now. It's some other Western. You know, Kris Kristofferson kind of looks like Eric Clapton now. I love in *Taxi Driver* when Robert DeNiro gives her the Kris Kristofferson record, and he goes, "He's a poet, a prophet," and he takes her to the porno movie, and he's like, "What? What? I didn't know you wouldn't like this." [*laughs*]

FLUX: Are you looking forward to Lollapalooza?

HOROVITZ: I wasn't, at first. None of us wanted to do it. But then we got to thinking. Lollapalooza is gonna be kind of dope, actually. It's gonna be good. I didn't want to do it 'cause it's gonna be corny. Lollapalooza is crazy corny, but then, playing outdoors and having parties all day long, it's gonna be cool.

FLUX: Why do you call Lollapalooza corny? It's the cutting-edge, alternative rallying point for the youth of today, right?

HOROVITZ: Exactly! The big money market...although it's the cutting edge. [*laughs*] It's all bullshit, really. I just think it's gonna be a good time. That's why we're gonna do it.

I don't like any of the bands that went out on any of the Lollapalooza tours. In theory, it should be cool, but in theory, I should like raves, because I think it's cool that 1,500 kids can just get crazy and go out in the middle of nowhere and listen to crazy music, you know what I mean? But when it comes down to it, I don't like that music. Lollapalooza is a good idea, but because of the bands and all the media that surrounds it, it's corny. But I guess you can't avoid that. It just happens.

FLUX: Does the fact that your marriage to Ione Skye has been out of the media spotlight disappoint you in any way?

HOROVITZ: [*laughs*] I've been trying to get on the cover of *Details* and *Paper* and all these magazines, and it's just not working! I guess I'm not that hot. [*laughs*] It took me a long time to deal with that, but I think I'm getting over it now.

FLUX: What's your favorite Ione Skye movie?

HOROVITZ: Probably *River's Edge*. But performance-wise, she was really good in this movie *Gas Food Lodging*. It wasn't the fastest movie, but she was good.

FLUX: Ooh, she was naked in that one, too, wasn't she?

HOROVITZ: Well, that'll help sales.

FLUX: Did that bother you?

HOROVITZ: Um, I don't think so. If it was off-camera I wouldn't encourage it, but I don't think I have to worry about that.

FLUX: [*Dinosaur Jr. guitarist*] J. Mascis was good in that movie, too.

HOROVITZ: He's a great actor. He brings sparkle to the camera. He's got that twinkle in his eye. [*laughs*]

FLUX: Talk about slacker icons. You couldn't slack more if you tried.

HOROVITZ: Appearance-wise, everything. Somebody's got to talk to him about hats, though. No offense, but give my man a baseball hat or something. *Something*.

---

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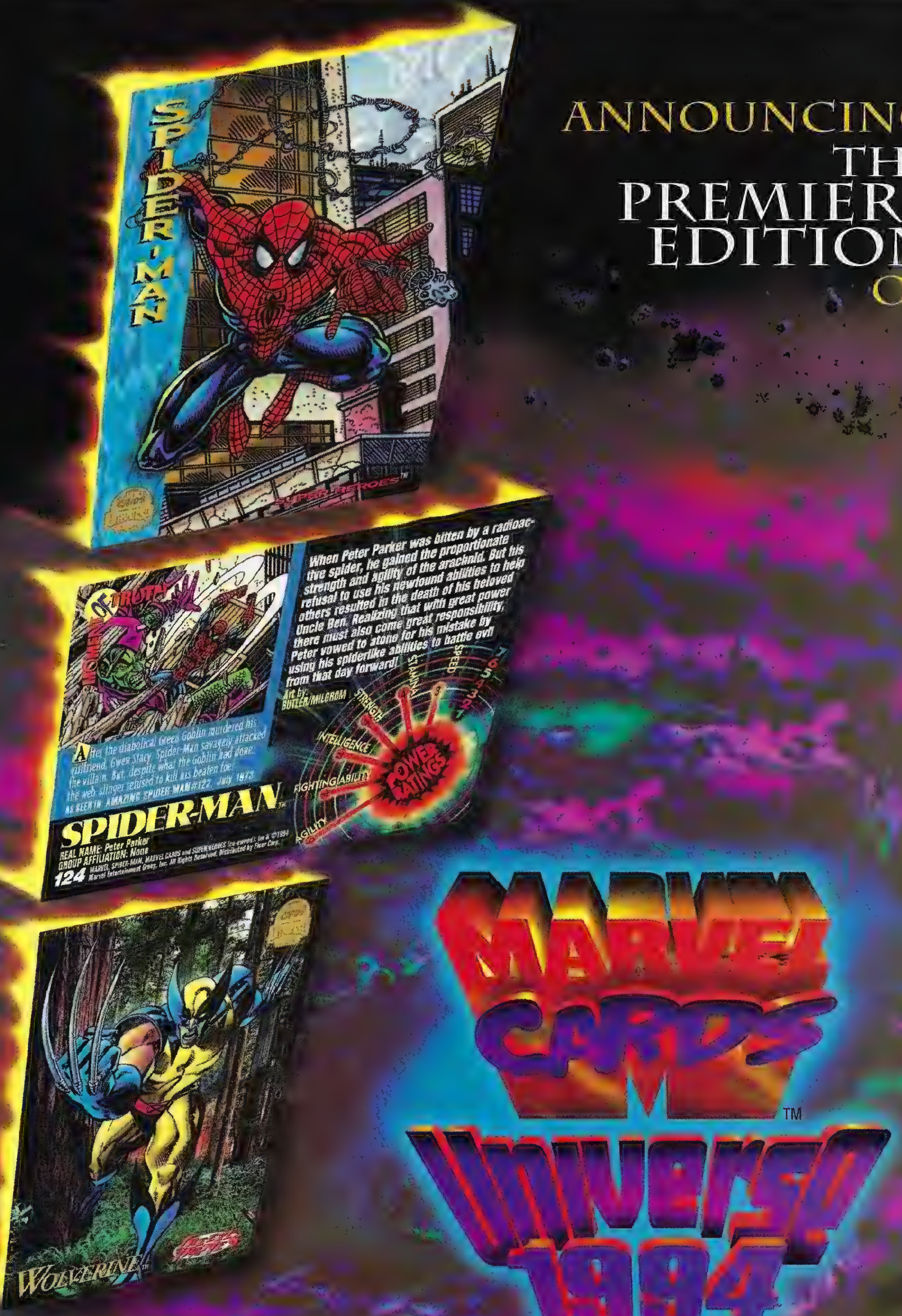

After the diabolical Green Goblin murdered his girlfriend, Gwen Stacy, Spider-Man savagely attacked the villain. But, despite what the Goblin had done, the web slinger refused to kill his beaten foe.
AS SEEN IN: AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #122, JULY 1973

When Peter Parker was bitten by a radioactive spider, he gained the proportionate strength and agility of the arachnid. But his refusal to use his newfound abilities to help others resulted in the death of his beloved Uncle Ben. Realizing that with great power there must also come great responsibility, Peter vowed to atone for his mistake by using his spiderlike abilities to battle evil from that day forward!

Art by: BUTLER/MILGROM

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GROUP AFFILIATION: None
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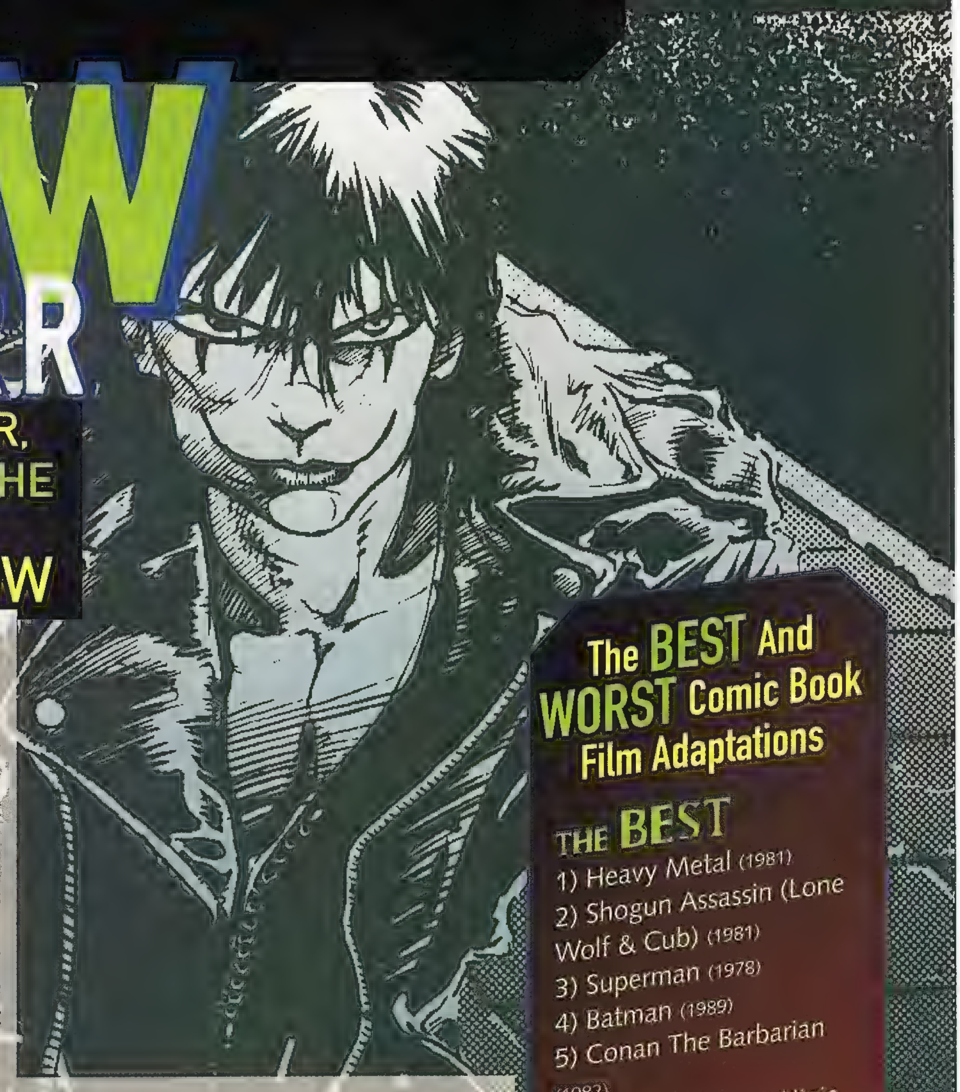
Crow BARR

MEET JAMES O'BARR, THE MIND BEHIND THE DARK, GRUESOME TALE OF THE CROW



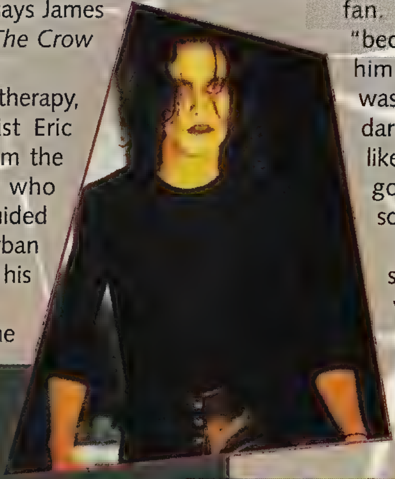
No movie set is heaven, but this one was starting to look a lot like hell.

The Crow was going to be a mid-to-low budget gothic revenge tale, about a murdered guitarist who returns from the grave to exact gut-wrenching vengeance: call it Un-*Death Wish*. But the horror seemed to flow off the screen: an electrician was jolted by 13,000 volts of live power, burning 90 percent of his body and fusing his eyes shut. A carpenter accidentally drove a screwdriver through his hand. A stage hand went berzerk, driving his car through set walls and terrorizing production assistants. An eerie storm ripped through the set, leaving disaster in its wake. Production assistants jokingly talked about a curse—The Curse of *The Crow*.

But no one was joking on April Fool's Day, 1993—the day a "prop" bullet fired at *Crow* star Brandon Lee turned out to be a deadly .44 caliber slug. The staff laughed as Brandon bent over in agony, thinking it was just another one of his pranks (like the time he showed up for a gore-packed scene dressed in a huge Cher wig); when they noticed the blood, and the fact that Brandon wasn't moving, the laughter stopped.

It's ironic that the comic on which *The Crow* is based was originally written as a way of dealing with the loss of a loved one. "I still can't talk about it," says James O'Barr, its creator. "Doing *The Crow* was cheaper than therapy."

Revenge is cheaper than therapy, too. In *The Crow*, guitarist Eric Draven is brought back from the grave by a dark spirit bird who leads the audience on a guided butcher's tour of a rotting urban hell—as Draven knocks off his murderers one by one.



Besides writing the incredibly popular comic book on which the film was based—possibly the most popular black and white comic of all time—O'Barr also played a key role in selecting the heavy-duty lineup for the movie soundtrack. O'Barr, himself a musician, wanted to make sure that the film's music complemented its harsh, dark mood. As a result, the soundtrack includes new tunes from Stone Temple Pilots, Pantera, The Cure, Helmet and Rage Against the Machine. "We wanted the music to retain the gothic, alternative feel of the comic," he says. "Some of the artists were even fans of the comic."

As it turns out, Brandon was also a fan. "It's funny," says O'Barr, "because when first I talked to him, he was so sweet that I wasn't sure he could play a dark, menacing character like Eric Draven. Then he got in there and stole scenes from everybody."

Only six days of shooting remained when Lee was killed. O'Barr says that only special effects shots remained, and that Lee's stand-in was able to seamlessly complete the filming.

Meanwhile, people are still talking curses and conspiracy theories, claiming, for instance, that Brandon was killed by his father's assassins—martial arts fanatics who sought revenge on Bruce for daring to reveal ancient secrets. So is there a Curse of *The Crow*?

Of course not. Curses only exist in movies and comic books, right? And even if there were a curse, it would only affect people associated with the production, not audience members or wri...

BY JEFF YANG

The BEST And WORST Comic Book Film Adaptations

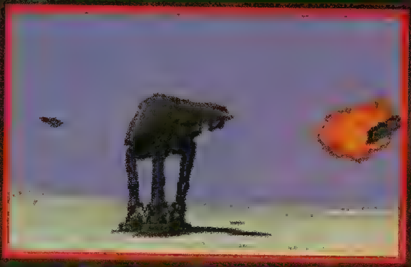
THE BEST

1) Heavy Metal (1981)
2) Shogun Assassin (Lone Wolf & Cub) (1981)
3) Superman (1978)
4) Batman (1989)
5) Conan The Barbarian (1982)
6) Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (1990)

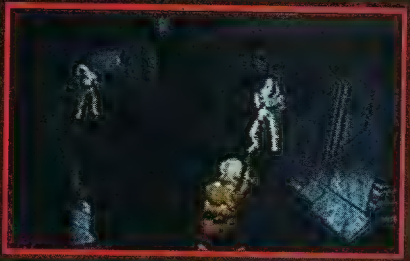
THE WORST

1) Captain America (1979)
2) Howard The Duck (1986)
3) The Punisher (1990)
4) Superman IV—The Quest For Peace (1987)
5) Dr. Giggles (1992)
6) Return Of The Swamp Thing (1989)

STRAP



YOURSELF



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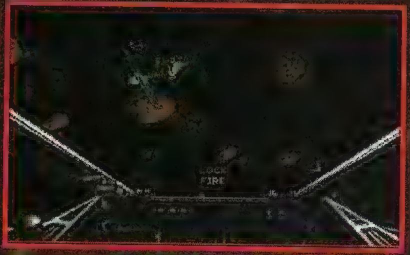
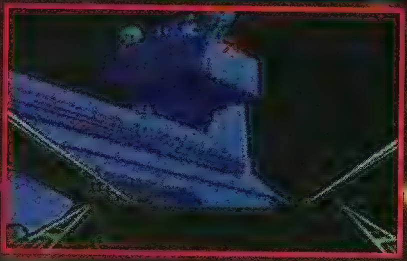


FLIGHT



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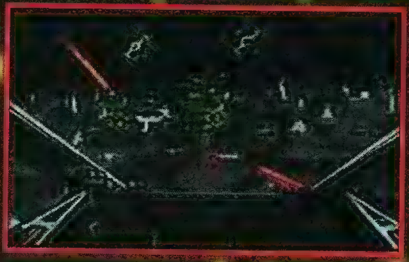

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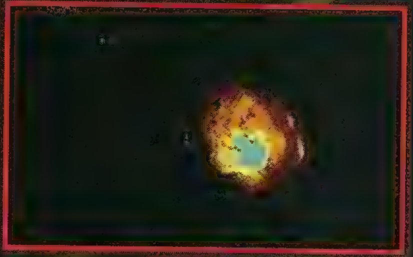

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LAW OF THE JUNGLE

HOW TO AVOID GETTING YOUR ASS

Welcome to the Arcade.

It ain't America. It ain't even Earth. Once you step through those doors, you enter a dimension of electronic fantasy—a virtual reality rocked by flashing lights, digital beeps, computer voices and humanoid trash talk. If you're an alien or a parent or something, you probably think that these dens of electronic iniquity are **LAWLESS, DANGEROUS PLACES.** But we know better. The arcade is a different world—but it does have rules.

The laws that govern arcade behavior have existed since the ancient days of pinball. But since gaming has changed so much in character over the past few years, *following* the rules has become much more important.

"Games used to be *you* versus the *computer*," says Nebraskan 'cader John Grigsby. "Now, almost all games are you versus the current champion. They're much more like pool tables. You're not playing the game anymore, you're playing another person."

Now that "one-on-one" games—particularly fighting games—dominate the arcades, failing to follow the rules of arcade etiquette can be dangerous. There's always going to be someone who's just looking for an excuse to try out some Street Fighter II moves on *your* head. But not to worry. In general, behaving with respect for players and machines makes this nightmare scenario unlikely. Basically, arcade etiquette can be summed up in ten easy commandments which, if followed, keep electrogaming fun and safe.

and your head unbroken...

BY JEFF YANG PHOTOS BY JOHN DOLAN ILLUSTRATIONS BY MIKE GORMAN

The TEN command-ments of COIN-op etiquette

S

KICKED AT THE ARCADE

1st Commandment

Thou shalt make thy intentions clear.

This is known as the "quarters up" or "jamming in" rule. To make your desire to play a game clear, put your quarter on the little plastic rim that lines the videogame's dashboard. Then, watch your quarter and wait your turn. Once you jam in, don't touch your quarter unless you're going to leave—people are understandably sensitive about people touching their money. "Don't touch quarters on a machine," says Paul Hughes, a player from the Lone Star state. "If you value your hands, keep them in your pockets."

Putting up a number of quarters equal in worth to the national debt is bad form, as is chunking in quarter after quarter for "continues" when a horde of people are waiting, quarters up, behind you. Also, always be sensitive to the current player's game. Breaking someone's concentration by reaching across the screen or over their shoulder to put up a quarter will likely result in a lost life or screwed-up pattern—and perhaps a not-so-gentle lesson in manners.

2nd Commandment

Thou shalt give advice when asked for it, and only when asked for it.

Players vary widely in ability. One of the best things about 'cading is bonding over the games by teaching new players secret moves and combinations. However, if a player isn't asking for advice, it's probably better to keep your mouth shut. Who knows? He may know something you don't.

"One time I was playing Asteroids and upping my score by killing saucers instead of finishing the set and moving on," says Californian gamer Greg Knauss, "and some eager kid was standing next to me, yelling, 'Hit the rocks! Hit the rocks! You're supposed to hit the rocks! Hit them!"

On the other hand, if someone is obviously struggling, offering a word of advice is cool. And if someone actually *asks* you to teach them something, do it—if they ask you nicely and you're not busy playing. Keeping a list of Secret Kodz and Moovz just so you can beat everyone is lame. Share the knowledge. It's a karma thing.

3rd Commandment

Thou shalt give the player room.

Arcades are crowded and noisy. Don't make it worse by inflicting your limbs, voice or body odor on a concentrating player.

"My number-one arcade peeve is when someone comes up to you while you're playing and starts talking," says Craig Yarbrough of State College, Pennsylvania. "I can't remember how many times I've lost a high score 'cause one of my friends or, worse yet, a *complete stranger* walks up while I'm killing a Boss and starts yappin'. An occasional 'Hey, nice move!' or 'Too bad, man!' is fine, but anything else is very uncouth."

If you can't fit another person between you and the player, you're too close. If you're casting a shadow on the screen, you're too close. If you can smell another player, you're way too close or the player really smells; either way, you're too close.

"And *never* ask someone for money, or to play their men," says Chris McBride of Tuscon, Arizona. "That's crass and rude. Once this kid asked if he could play one of my men! Of course, I said no. So he just reached over and started pounding on the keys." If you're stuck with a younger kid brother or sister, you're responsible for him or her. Watch them. Or better yet, leave them at home.

"Many years ago, this guy I know was intensely involved with a 1975 Gottlieb Abra Ca Dabra when a small arcade rat got too close," says pinballer Terry Cumming. " Now, he was having a bad day and shoved the arcade rat out of the way. The rat didn't like being pushed, and started goading him. After several taunts, this guy rammed the arcade rat's head into the playfield glass. He was later arrested, but after an apology, all was well."

It just doesn't have to be that way...

4th Commandment

Thou shalt not bear false witness.

Lying sucks. Don't do it. You might think it's funny to spread rumors about Reptile's "Secret Fatality," in which he pulls out his opponent's small intestine and knits a macramé potholder, but someone who wastes ten bucks trying to follow your stupid fake move list probably will not. "I hate nothing more than some kid in an arcade arguing with me about how there's such and such move in this game," says John Coleman of Lynchburg, Virginia. "Don't tell anyone anything that *you* can't prove." A prime example is "Animalities" in MK2. They do not exist. Even the programmers have denied their existence, but some people still insist on spreading rumors about them.

Lies
Lies
Lies
Lies
Lies
Lies

It's also not cool to claim fake initials or brag about topping games you haven't mastered. "If someone has just blown away the high score, and is so hip that he or she doesn't put their initials in, *do not* stroll up as soon as the machine is clear and tap in your own," says 'cader Aaron Mandel. "Eventually, you'll be called on it and have to defend a rep that isn't yours."

5th Commandment

Thou shalt not be cheesy.

To be "cheesy" or "cheap" is to exploit a minor or major flaw in a fighting game in order to perform an unstoppable attack on an opponent. When the flaw is obviously a major one, there's no question about it: it's cheating. One example is the "Guile Shadow Throw" in the original *Street Fighter II*, which allowed him to flip an opponent without touching him, even from across the screen. (Other, less useful Guile glitches included the Velcro, which gave Guile players the ability to cause opponents to stick to them like glue and the Guile Shutdown, which was a catastrophic programming error that gave Guile players the power to crash the machine.) In early versions of *Mortal Kombat II*, a notoriously buggy game, Sub-Zero could perform part of his fatality while the fight was still on, thus "Perma-Freezing" his opponent. There is no defense to this, and PF'd players were stuck there until the timer ran out; some cheesy players would get ahead, PF their opponents, and then wait until time expires, winning the round. "That isn't fair, especially because the whole thing is so obviously a glitch," says Aaron Mandel. "Using it at certain points even made the game crash."

On the other hand, what about *minor* fighting-game "flaws"? In some circles, throwing—which is generally very hard to defend against and causes a lot of damage—is considered cheesy. "Throwing is *cheap*!" says Internetter Yim Myung Bin. "How much skill does it take to walk up to someone and throw them? The answer is, *none*. If you think you're good, you shouldn't resort to using cheap moves to win."

A player who relies on throws may be asking for an extra-large portion of Butt-Kick Casserole. In general, it's safer to ask what the house rules are regarding throwing if you're not sure.

6th Commandment

Thou shalt not gloat.

This would seem to be a pretty simple one to understand, right? If you're good, prove it on the sticks, don't jump around and wiggle your ass at those who aren't as good as you.

"No one is more hated than a cocky player," says John Coleman. "If you win, great. Big deal. So you've played for longer, or are better than the other guy. Half the time it's some guy out with his girlfriend looking to waste fifty cents, and he really doesn't care. Don't act like a badass and try to embarrass him. He may be bigger than you."

Even if you are bigger, he may have friends. "Who needs it?" asks Coleman. "With these games nowadays that let you kill the other person, you rub it in enough anyway."

7th Commandment

Thou shalt not whine, either.

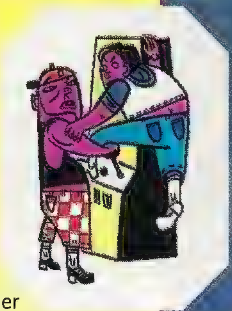
Okay, so you've lost. Big deal. You're down, what, a quarter? Walk away, or put another quarter down. Failure teaches more lessons than success, so remember how that guy beat you and practice it. Hey, if you don't act like a sore loser, maybe he'll even show you some moves.

And don't call every move cheesy either. "In a well-balanced game, there should be no move that's so overpowering that there's no escape," says 'cader Lee Saito. "Some tactics should be harder to evade than others, but nothing should be completely invincible. It's the people who don't have the skills that cry 'Cheap!' the loudest. Find two masters of *Street Fighter II*, for instance, and you will never hear one calling the other cheap. Have a master play a rookie, and you'll hear all kinds of whining from the rookie. I've played games where rookies have called *every single move I do*, 'cheap.' I guess using the attack buttons is cheap, huh?"

If there's a consensus as to what's cheap, follow it. If there isn't, don't make a ruckus about "cheesiness." Generally, the crowd will complain if a player is being a jerk, which takes the heat off of you.

8th Commandment

Thou shalt not butt thy nose in without invitation.



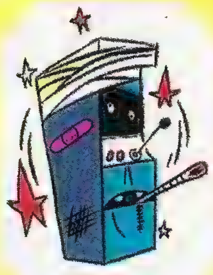
Burn this one on your wallet where you can see it when you reach for change. DON'T ENTER A GAME UNLESS YOU'RE ASKED TO. If you aren't asked, you should ask first. And if the other player says "no," wait your turn.

For non-fighting games—cooperative games, for instance—another player suddenly appearing on screen can screw up a pattern or be very distracting.

"Always, I mean *always*, ask someone if you can join their game," says Chris McBride. "I was playing a shoot-'em-up game—I think it was *Raiden*—the kind where the farther you go without dying, the better your ship is. If you died, you started over with a pea-shooter. Well, I'm cranking, getting farther on one ship than I've ever gotten, and this *idiot* jumps up and sticks a quarter in. The distraction of his ship appearing made me lose *my* ship! I turn and yell at the chump, telling him to *ask* next time—and I lose another ship!'

9th Commandment

Thou shalt not abuse the machines.



Games these days are pretty great: they can talk to you, flash threats at you, do everything short of nibble your ear and tell you they love you. What they can't do is fight back if you physically abuse them. A computer opponent might defeat you, but taking it out on the stick and cabinet only guarantees that the game won't be there for you to practice on in the future. Games are more delicate than they look.

"Don't abuse the games," says Aaron Mandel. "Don't whack your hand on the glass after a bad pinball game. Don't shout 'You motherfucking BITCH!' at *Street Fighter II* if you lose the first round. Don't assume that jamming the joystick against the side of its casing will make the game respond faster. Nobody likes dropping money into a game only to find out that the left leafspring isn't responding."

You should also remember that machines are not able to feel pain and *you* aren't so lucky. Putting your fist through a screen will break the machine, but you will also be arrested, sent to the hospital—and your peers will think you're an utter hole.

Machines can't hear, either. It's fine to get into a game, and shouts of "Die! Die!" can enhance the 'cade experience for everybody, but getting verbally abusive says more about you than the machine. "Swearing at an inanimate object because of *your* shortcomings is an indication that you are brain dead," says Jonny Farringdon, a transatlantic 'cader from the U.K.

Also, if you have strange personal gaming rituals, keep them for your home Nintendo—*don't* inflict them on 'cade games and other players.

"It's not really a good idea to lick your fingers before, after or during play," says McBride. "I've seen this every so often, and it's disgusting. Imagine that the player *before* you slobbered all over his hands. Now *you're* hammering on the buttons—and then you're going to stick your fingers in your mouth?"

10th Commandment

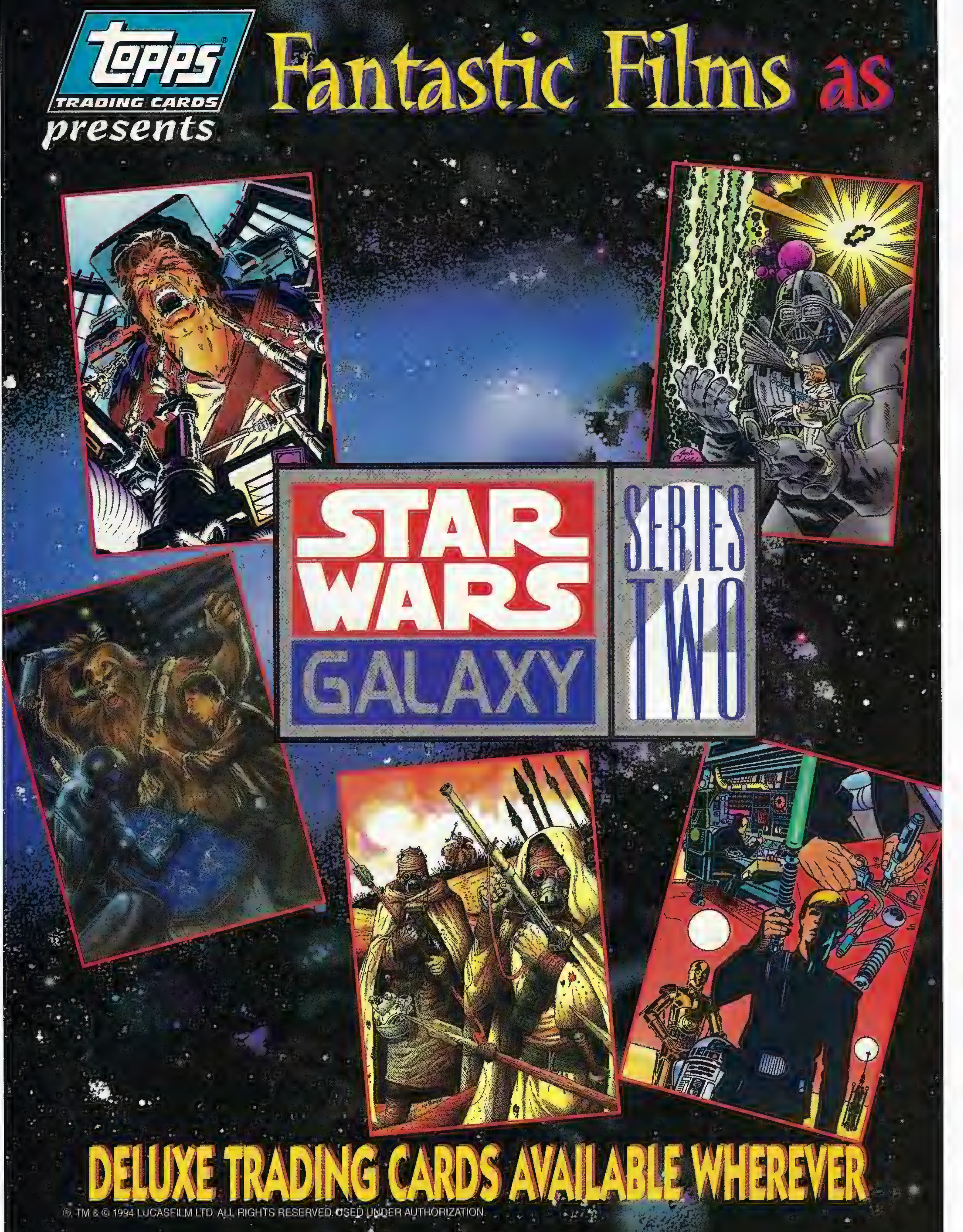
Thou shalt remember it's just a game.

Ignore one through nine; if you follow ten, you're golden. Basically, videogames are for *fun*. Even if someone dicks you over in a big way, you haven't lost anything except some spare change and your pride, and the latter is just temporary. Leave the arcade. See a movie, hang with your friends, heck, read a book if you have to. Next time you go, it'll be like nothing ever happened.

"If your opponent pulls off a difficult move, or counters a seemingly impossible combo, drop a compliment," says John Coleman. "You won't have him pissed off if you beat him, and he'll generally be nicer to you. If you lose, he may be merciful, and let you win a round. You'll probably make a friend, too." Or at least you won't make an enemy.

Some strange creatures hang at the 'cades, and you don't want to have a run-in with them. "I was playing Mortal Kombat in this mall," says an anonymous gamer from Baltimore. "I was Sub-Zero, and I was fighting the computer, which in this round was a female character, Sonya. As the game began I discovered that half of the buttons on the machine didn't work, so, needless to say, I got battered rather badly. Some guy walked up and said, 'She's really kicking your ass. You must be too much of a gentleman to beat up on a lady.' After I reassured him that I would very much like to do a better job of fighting if only the buttons worked, he seemed to become overly concerned with the injustice of a broken video game. 'That's so unfair,' he said. 'That's really just not right.' Seeing that my game was about to end, he reached into his coat pocket and pulled out a 9mm handgun. 'Shall I blow her away for you?' he asked excitedly. Strangely enough, nobody in the packed gameroom seemed to notice a man pointing a gun at a machine. I tried to persuade him that it was okay, I didn't really mind losing, but he insisted. 'Really, I think I've gotta blast her," he said, "I mean, it's just not fair.' At this point, the game ended and he seemed to lose interest. 'Well, maybe next time I can help you,' he said as he moved over to get some tokens from the money changer."

Hey. It's just a game...right?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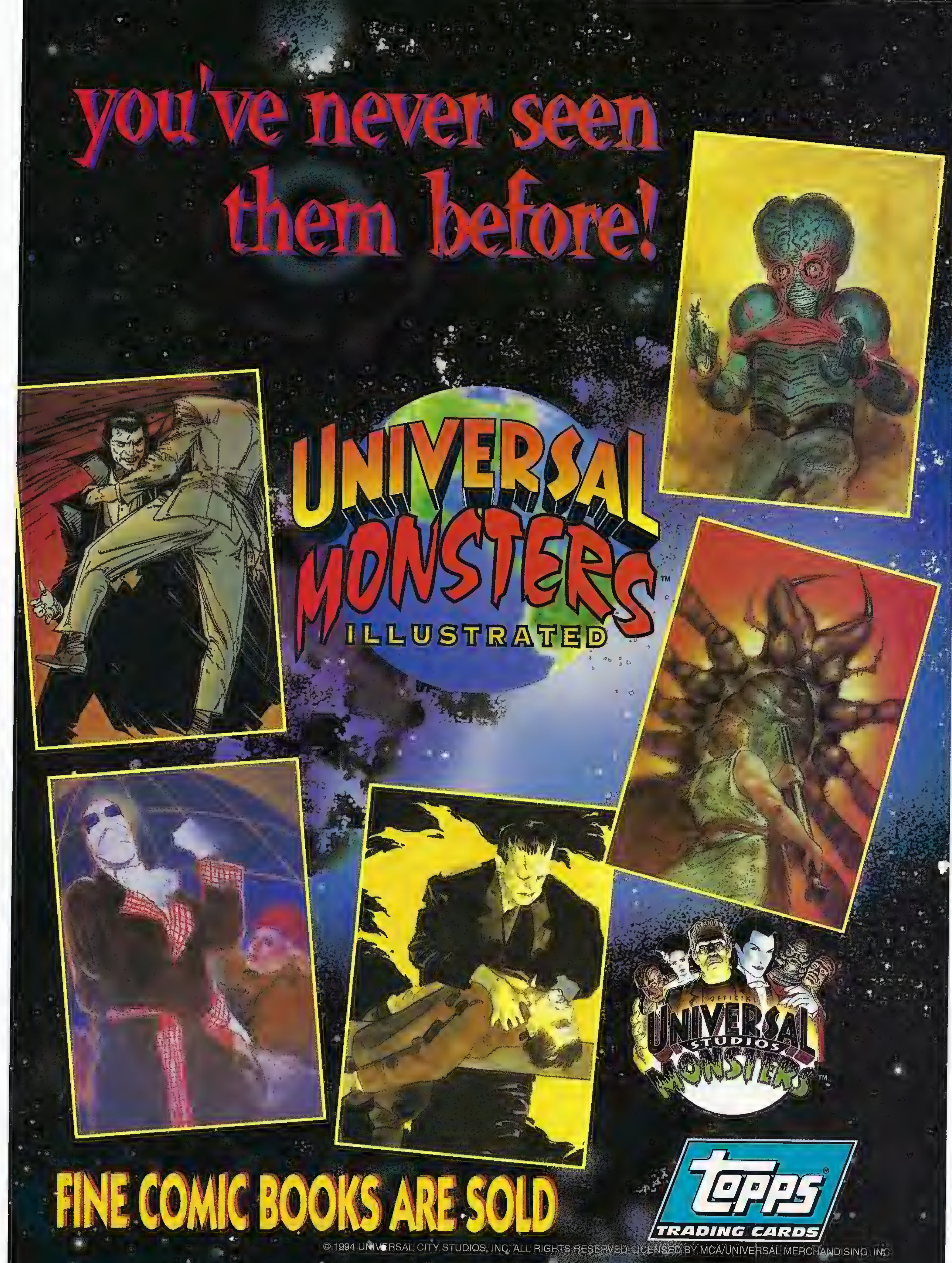
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Young Blood

Bad-boy artist ROB LIEFELD injects new blood into his hottest title.

IF YOU'RE A COMIC BOOK ARTIST, THESE ARE THE RULES: Don't go out and completely torque a big-money title like *X-Force*. Don't start your own comic company. And *fer cryin' out loud*, don't do a commercial for Levi's 501 Blues.

But artist Rob Liefeld was never one for rules (or Marvel's artist guidelines). As co-founder of Image Comics, he and a bunch of fellow renegades created a company that—out of nowhere—turned into an industry two-ton gorilla, largely thanks to *Youngblood*. That title, which elicits praise from comic fans and scorn from comic purists, continued Liefeld's artistic legacy of in-your-face composition, Japanese-inspired stylistic quirks and high-powered killer kombat scenes.

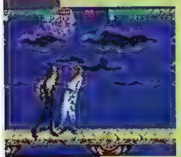
Since its debut more than two years ago, *Young blood* has remained one of Image's most popular comics. Despite the book's incredible success—or maybe because of it—Liefeld recently put down his pencils and took a mysterious extended break.

"I took some time off to clear my head," says Liefeld. "I realized that all we were doing at Image was action-adventure stuff, and that too many of the books imitated each other. By the time I did the last few pages of *Youngblood: Strike File* issue three, I was like, 'I've had enough of this.'"

While on hiatus, Liefeld spent some time in Hollywood, wheeling and dealing in an effort to turn *Youngblood* into a Saturday-morning cartoon. But, as he explains, handing his prize creation over to a network conglomerate was not in his, or the comic's, best interest.

"CBS is just too conservative for my tastes," says Liefeld. "When you go to the mass market, you run the risk of killing your property. *The Flash*, *Fish Police* and *Cadillacs And Dinosaurs* are all primo examples of that."

So Liefeld is back where he belongs, behind the drawing board, with plans to relaunch a new and improved *Youngblood* later this month. "When I first started doing *Youngblood*, I didn't even have a game plan," he says. "There was a definite neglect of character throughout the first issue. The new issues, however, will feature much more character development. What does this guy eat for dinner? What does he do when he goes home at night? What are his motivations, his phobias?"



Great. But will there still be fights?

"Of course," snorts Liefeld. "It's a *comic book*."

BY JEFF YANG

Rob's heros:

1 **Jack Kirby:** "I always admired his ability to efficiently move the camera around in his artwork and tell a good story. He's my number-one artistic influence."

2 **Arnold Schwarzenegger:** "He's got a lot of drive and personal charisma, and is a great salesman for whatever he does."

3 **Michael Jackson:** "I always appreciated Michael's ability to reach the top, then work extra hard to reach an even higher level. He has the ability to handle a problem or difficult situation."

PHOTO BY MARCUS CUFF

SHOOTYZ GROOVE

JAMMIN IN VICIOUS ENVIRONMENTS

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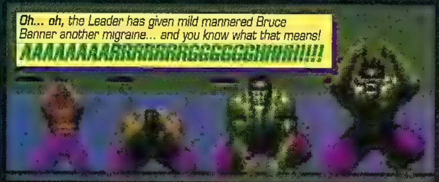
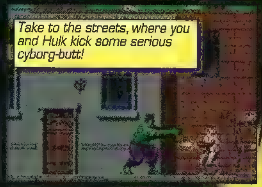


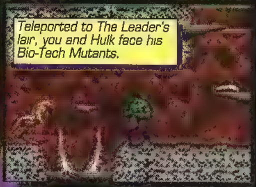
Oh... oh, the Leader has given mild mannered Bruce Banner another migraine... and you know what that means! **AAAAAAAARRRRRRRRGGGGGGHHHH!!!!**

Travel high above the city with Hulk and help him put a serious hurt on Rhino and his henchmen!



Take to the streets, where you and Hulk kick some serious cyborg-butt!

COME ON... IF YOU THINK YOU'RE TOUGH ENOUGH!



Teleported to The Leader's lair, you and Hulk face his Bio-Tech Mutants.

HULK
GAME GEAR
HULK
HULK
SUPER NINTENDO

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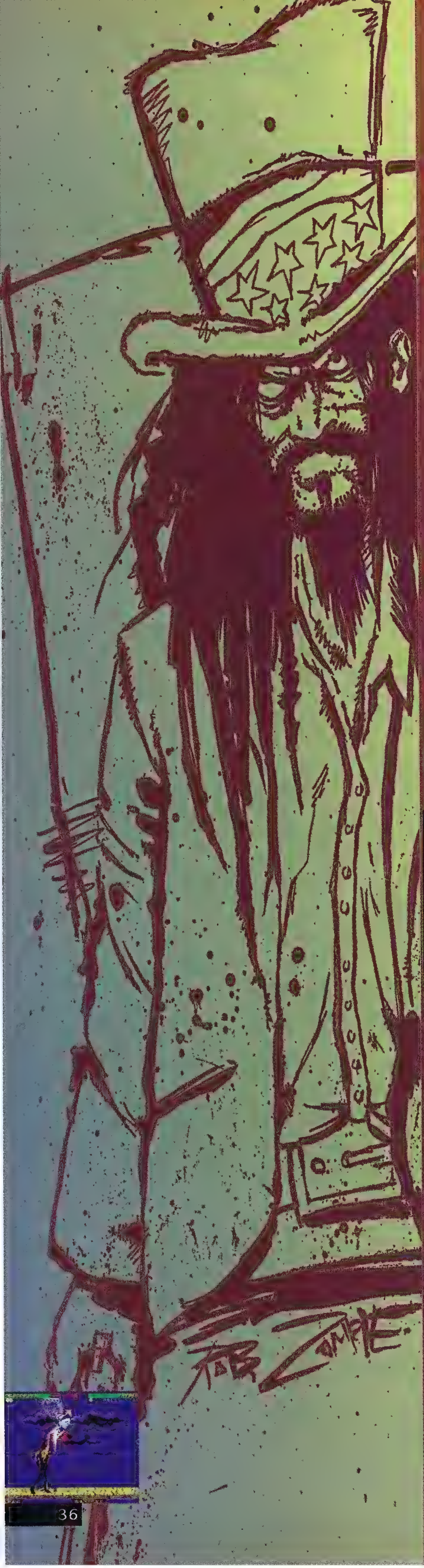


POISON PEN

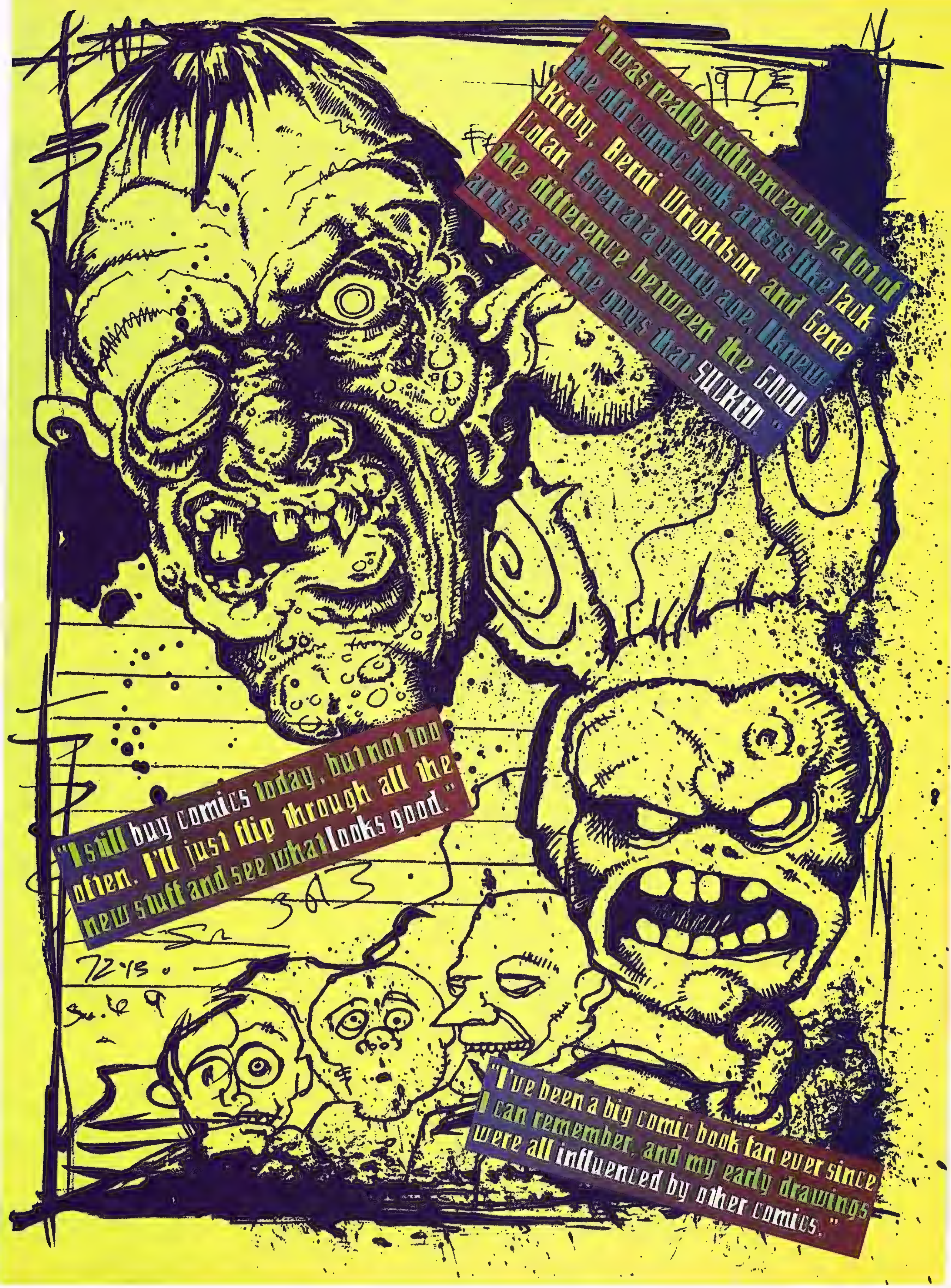
ROB ZOMBIE'S PSYCHOTIC SKETCHBOOK

INTERVIEW BY JEFF KITTS

ROB ZOMBIE IS ONE FUNKY LOOKIN' DUDE: Tattered clothes, government-issue shades, multiple tattoos, that crazy hat... And jeez, those ratty dreads. With a tough-as-nails look like that, you know he's gotta be a musician, an artist or some backwoods psychotic that eats bark. Well, two out of three ain't bad.

As the frontman for White Zombie—the six-year-old New York City grime-rock outfit that recently achieved mass popularity with their album, *La Sexorcisto: Devil Music Vol. One* (Geffen)—Rob Zombie has become one of rock's most recognizable performers. But in addition to a dirty, gravel-throated voice, Zombie also sports a keen artist's eye, having designed and created every White Zombie album and t-shirt to date.

Flux recently asked the chief dread-head to bust out his sketchbook and show us what he's got. Accepting the challenge, Zombie put pen to paper and came up with some pieces that rival even today's hottest comic book artists. Oh, yeah, he showed us but *good*.



"I was really influenced by a lot of the old comic book artists like Jack Kirby. Berni Wrightson and Gene Colan. Even at a young age, I knew the difference between the GOOD artists and the guys that SUCKED."

"I still buy comics today, but not too often. I'll just flip through all the new stuff and see what looks good."

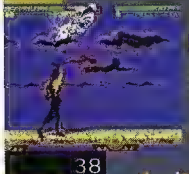
"I've been a big comic book fan ever since I can remember, and my early drawings were all influenced by other comics."

"Every little kid draws and I was no different. Most kids give it up after a certain point, but I never did—although I never really took it seriously, either. Only recently have I begun to take drawing more seriously." "The band pretty much takes up all my time, so I never really draw just for the hell of it. There's usually a purpose, like the Cannibal Cards, or a t shirt, or an album design, or the stuff I did for you guys. I just don't have enough time to sit there and sketch. Plus, I'm pretty unmotivated when it comes to drawing, so I need a real job with a deadline in order to get something done—it pushes me to work."

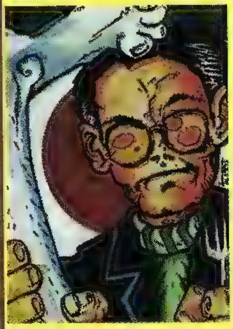
" ll these new comic artists are really good, but I'm not really into them because they all look like guys who learned how to draw from reading comics. Their stuff is so stylized in a comic book way. I prefer the old DC guys because they were just a bunch of free-lance illustrators who decided to draw comics, and they all had a really cool style. The guys today seem like they just learned how to draw from copying their favorite artists, and I'm not into that."

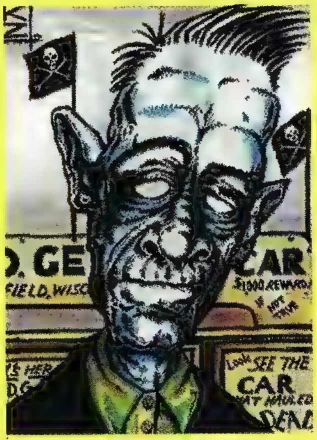
"To me, the artwork was always the most important thing in comic books. To tell you the truth, the writing in most comics pretty much stinks. I would always buy a comic with good art and never even read the thing. I never had any interest in what was going on in the story."

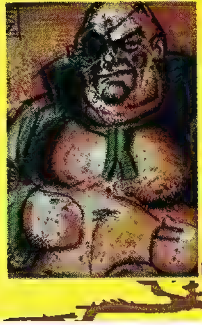
"I'M NEVER, EVER HAPPY with anything I do. Even with the band, the first thing I say after we finish an album is, 'This sucks.' I guess the reason I keep doing it is because I'm never happy—I always think I can do it better. If I was really happy with something, I probably wouldn't do it anymore."

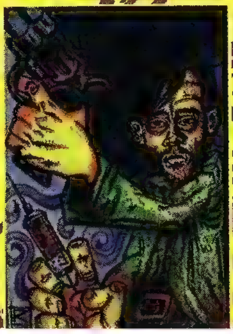


"I did the Cannibal Cards with two other guys: Chuck Biscuits from Danzig and Otis Link, who did the first serial killer trading card set. Each one is the size of a postcard, and they're like recipe cards for human stews and stuff like that. There are about 20 different cards, and each one's about a real cannibal like Ed Gein, Richard Chase or Jeffrey Dahmer."









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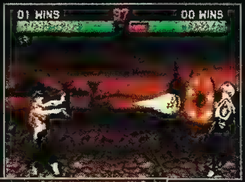
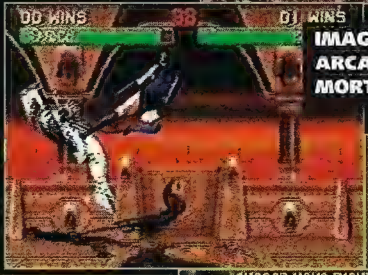
Prepare Yourself

Get ready for Round 2: MORTAL KOMBAT's killer sequel comes home

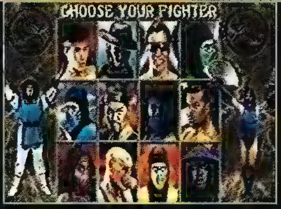
The word is out:

In September, *Mortal Kombat II* hits Super Nintendo, Genesis, Game Boy and Game Gear systems—*hard*. The original *Mortal Kombat* set a new record by selling over two million cartridges in just a few months. So, as the world waits for *MKII* to come home, Flux went straight to the source—Acclaim's *MKII* producer, Rob Leingang—to find out what to expect from the most anticipated release of the year.





BATTLE 5
LIVING FOREST



IMAGES FROM THE ARCADE VERSION OF MORTAL KOMBAT II

FLUX: How many of the fighters will appear in the home games? Will there be fatalities?

ROB LEINGANG: The Super NES and Genesis versions have all 12 arcade characters, each with his or her own finishing moves.

FLUX: *Mortal Kombat* is involved in huge controversy over violence in video games. In light of all the public and governmental outcry, will the home versions be as violent and bloody as the arcade game? How strong a rating will the games earn?

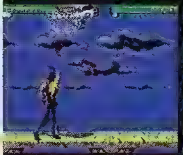
LEINGANG: The rating for *Mortal Kombat II* will not be determined until versions are submitted to Nintendo and Sega for approval. The home versions will be as true to the arcade as possible. [*Ed. Note: Flux recently discovered that the SNES version will have blood and fatalities!*]

FLUX: The arcade version of *MKII* is full of secret stuff. How many of the secret characters, like Jade and Smoke, will make the jump to the small screen? Will the hidden *Pong* game be included?

LEINGANG: All four versions will have hidden characters, but it has yet to be decided if the *Pong* game will be included.

FLUX: The original *MK* took 16 megs for SNES and Genesis. How big will *MKII* be?

LEINGANG: Both the Super NES and Genesis versions will be 24 megs.



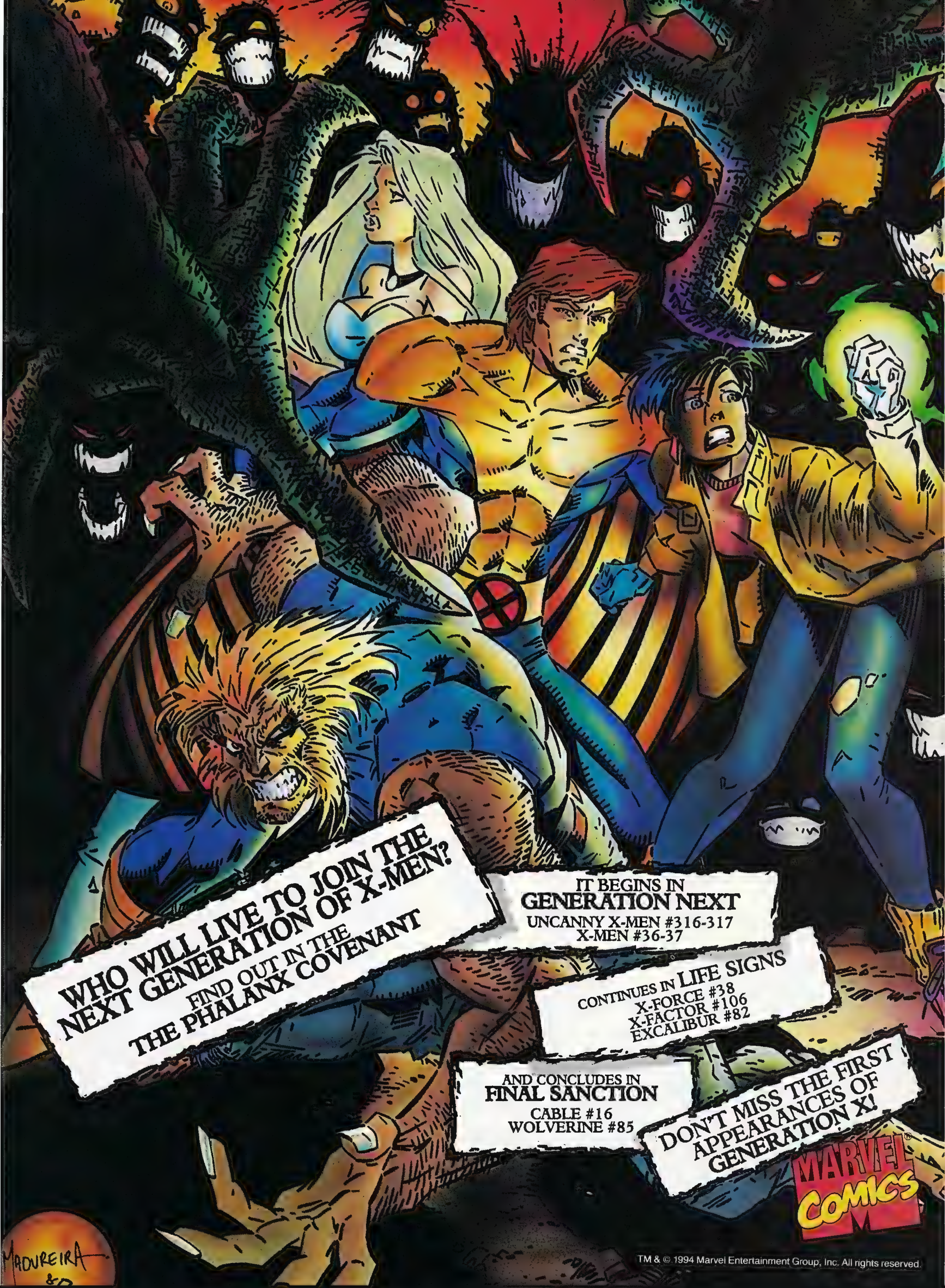
FLUX: What was the most difficult thing about programming *MKII*?

LEINGANG: The biggest obstacle to overcome was trying to condense a giant arcade game into a home system. Sometimes we're unable to include minor details like sound or the detail of hidden items.

FLUX: What did you learn from the original home versions of *MK* that you were able to use on *MKII*?

LEINGANG: **We learned that the human body can survive for up to two weeks without any sleep**. [*laughs*]

MORTAL KOMBAT® II © 1993 [illegible] MIDWAY® MANUFACTURING COMPANY [illegible]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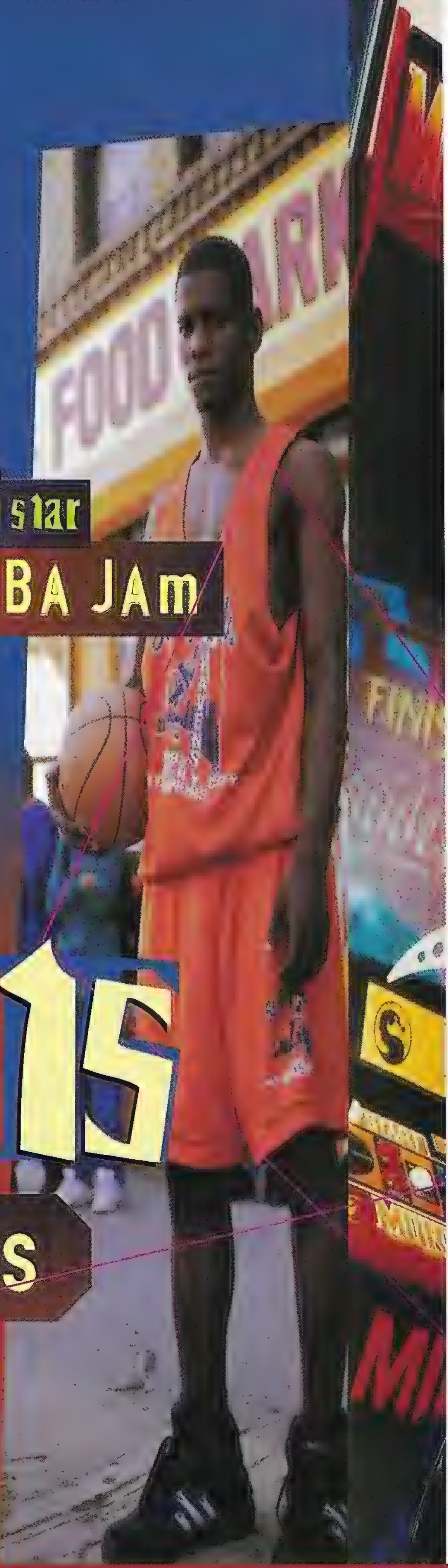
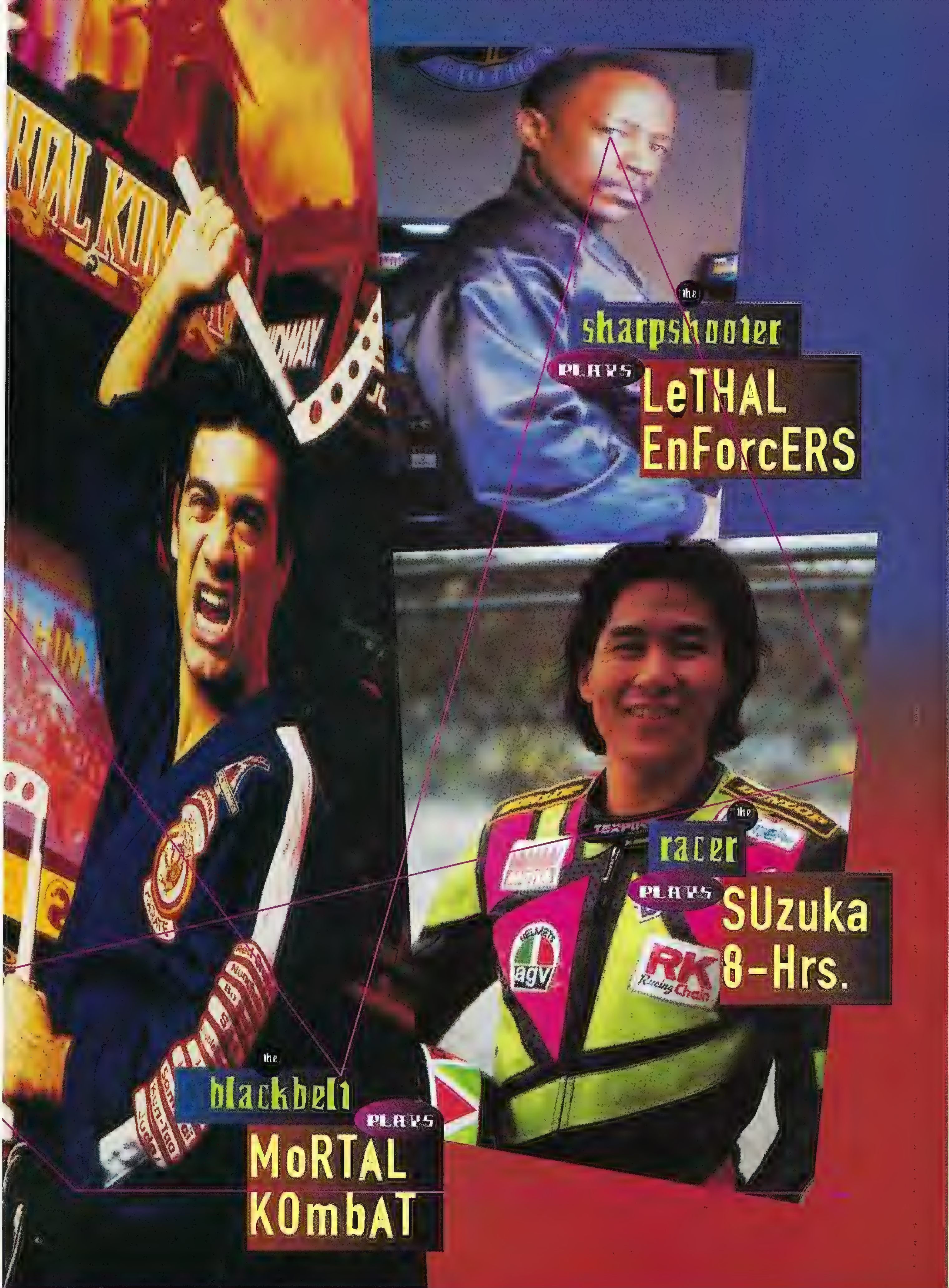
the Experts play the games

FOUR MEN a future NBA star, a martial arts instructor, a police officer and a mortorcycle racing champion— hit the arcade to tackle four of the most popular coin-ops: NBA Jam, Mortal Kombat, Lethal Enforcers and Suzuka 8 Hrs. Flux wanted to know whether real life veterans measured up to the average coin jockey. Do hours of pain-staking hoop-shooting, board-breaking, bullet-dodging, rubber-burning work prepare one for the enemy in the machine? Does hard work in the real world prepare one for the nanosecond, decision-making skills necessary in negotiating today's most popular games? Here's our results.

the hoop star plays NBA Jam




RTAL KOM
MIDWAY

the sharpshooter PLAYS LeTHAL EnForcERS

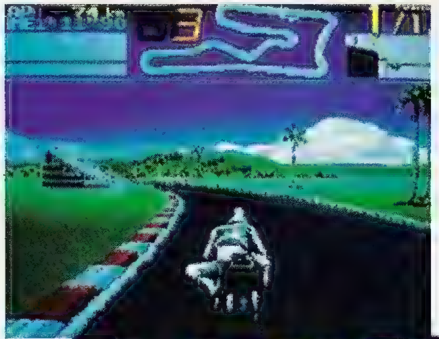
the racer PLAYS SUzuka 8-Hrs.

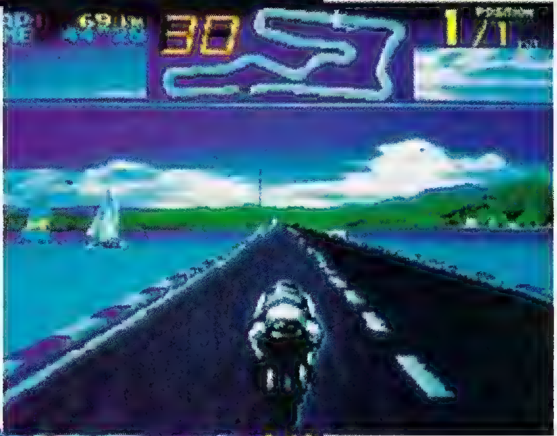
the blackbelt PLAYS MoRTAL KOmbAT

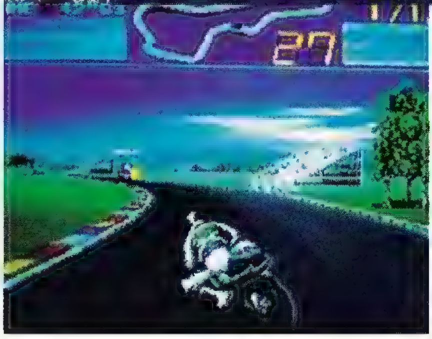
Dwayne Chung PLAYS SUZUKA 8HRS

★ 1993 Champion, American Federation Of Motorcyclists

Ask any junior hot rodder what the baddest motorsport arcade game is and the answer is always the same: Namco's *Suzuka 8 Hrs. Motorcycle Grand Prix*. This wildly popular and physically exhausting game is based on the annual Suzuka 8 Hour Endurance race in Japan.







With that in mind, we enlisted the racing skills of veteran biker Dwayne Chung, 1993 Champion Of The American Federation Of Motorcyclists, giving him the chance to either wail or flail in a *Suzuka 8 Hrs.* competition.

Like real motorcycle racing, *Suzuka 8 Hrs.* is very physical. Dwayne, dressed to the hilt in his racing leathers, climbed aboard one of the four model Superbikes and gunned the throttle. We were off. Dwayne, despite never having played the game, was slamming his bike down into sharp turns, holding the gas wide open and grabbing a handful of brake at the last possible second. We raced four times and, somehow, Dwayne kept finishing dead last.

"There must be something wrong with this game," said Dwayne. "It must not be programmed right."

Yeah. Sure, Dwayne.

FLUX: For a first-timer, what are your first impressions of *Suzuka 8 Hrs.*?

DWAYNE CHUNG: I really like that the game has more than one bike—the competition puts an edge on it. It's also cool when you start out because the rear wheel spins and leaves a black stripe on the pavement, just like my Superbike does in real life. You don't shift gears like a real racing bike, but if you throw it into a corner too hot, it slides both ends—pretty authentic.

FLUX: Do you find yourself racing more aggressively with the absence of risk?

CHUNG: Dirty riding is at an all-time high with this game. I think it would be more realistic if someone stood behind you and hit you on the head with a hammer every time you crashed.

FLUX: How does the level of competition compare to the track?

CHUNG: Real road racing is fierce. Your life is at stake. There's a lot of contact out there on the track, and we run into each other. I've had plenty of injuries—luckily nothing permanent.

FLUX: So, Dave—you haven't won a race all day. Is the *Suzuka 8 Hrs.* game like the real thing?

CHUNG: Man, I've never seen guys ride so hard and never let up off the gas in my entire life. Maybe the more time you spend on the real track, the worse you do on this thing because you know how bad it hurts when you crash for real.

INTERVIEW BY STEVE ENGELBRECHT **PHOTOS BY DAVE DUPREE**

Kareem Reid

PLAYS NBA JAM

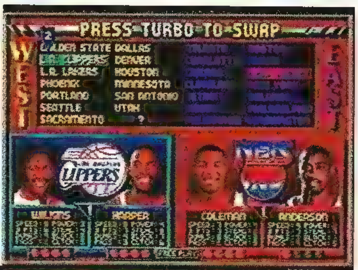
- Regarded as one of the best point guards in the country.
- High School team, St. Raymonds (Bronx, NY) won City and State Championship last year.
- Great Alaska Shootout MVP
- 1st team New York State
- 1st team All-City
- Graduated from St. Raymonds this year, college bound for Arkansas (winners of the 1994 NCAA National Championhip)

St. Raymonds
RAVE

Every day after school during his last semester at St. Raymonds in the Bronx, future NBA superstar Kareem Reid practiced his super slam dunks, three-pointers and some good, ol' fashioned, knock-down, drag-out defense—on the *NBA Jam* court, that is. We caught up with Reid at "Goodfellas," a local pizza joint in the Bronx, where he sunk quarter after quarter into his favorite game, *NBA Jam*.

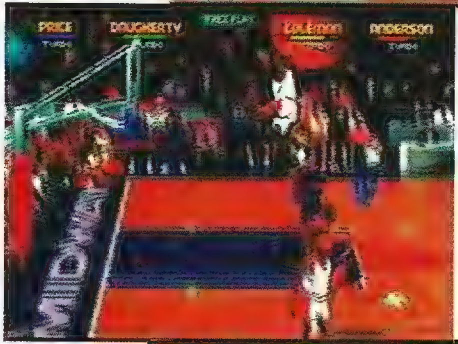
FLUX: What do you like the most about *NBA Jam*?

KAREEM REID: I can choose my favorite player—it has all the good players in the NBA. I also like the way they jump and jam and shoot the three. And the blocked shots are fierce.


PRESS TURBO TO SWAP
WEST
EAST
GOLDEN STATE
DALLAS
L.A. CLIPPERS
DENVER
L.A. LAKERS
HOUSTON
PHOENIX
MINNESOTA
PORTLAND
SAN ANTONIO
SEATTLE
UTAH
SACRAMENTO
?
CLIPPERS
WILKINS
HARPER
COLEMAN
ANDERSON

FLUX: Who is your favorite character?

REID: Kenny Anderson (New Jersey Nets). People compare my style of play on the court to Kenny and Nate Archibald. I like playing as the Nets. I also play as Seattle a lot. Kemp and Payton are the real thing.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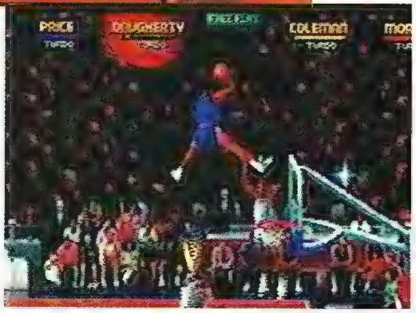

PRICE
DOUGHERTY
FREE PLAY
COLEMAN

FLUX: Have you played *NBA Jam Tournament Edition*?

REID: That's all I play. The place where I play only has *Tournament Edition*.

FLUX: How often do you play?

REID: Every day. I don't know how many quarters I've sunk in, but it's been a lot.

FLUX: Do you ever play any secret characters, like the cheerleaders?

REID: No way. That's cheating.

FLUX: With the super dunks and "on fire" powerups, *NBA Jam* is hardly a realistic basketball simulation. Does that matter to you?

REID: No. It's fun. Guys are doing jumps and somersaults, but it's cool. Older games are too boring.

FLUX: Is there anything about *NBA Jam* that does feel realistic?

REID: Oh, definitely. When I move the stick, it's like when I move. When I juke, the character jukes. It's like I'm there, out on the court, dishin' and shootin'.

FLUX: Do you have the home game?

REID: No. But my friend lent it to me. It was pretty good. I don't think I'd buy it. I like the arcade version.

FLUX: Do you play any other basketball video games?

REID: I play *NBA Showdown* (Electronic Arts). It's not as good as *Jam*, but I'm into it.

FLUX: Would you ever want to be a character in the game?

REID: Oh yeah! Definitely. If I had a character it would have my initials: KAR.

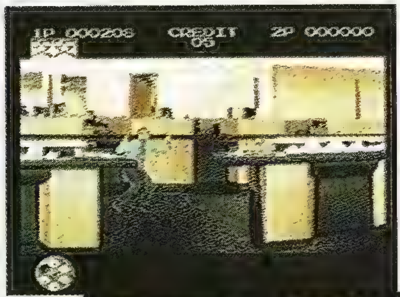
INTERVIEW BY DAVE LEWIS PHOTOS BY HARRY HELEOTIS

James Hill

PLAYS LETHAL ENFORCER

- Officer, Newark, New Jersey Police Department
- Valor rewards for performace above and beyond the call of duty

Quarters are all you have at stake in video game showdowns. On the streets, however, the consequences are slightly higher. "Ain't nobody gonna put another quarter in there so you can get up again," says Officer James Hill of the Newark Police Department.



1P 000000
CREDIT 05
2P 000000
PRESS START

1P 000008
CREDIT 05
2P 000000
PRESS START

At a modest 5'6", Officer Hill is one of the smallest law enforcers in one of the country's most dangerous cities. But when Hill walks through the South District projects in Newark, where ill-tempered, trigger-happy drug dealers are a daily occupational hazard, "everybody gets out of my way." His record is impressive—after graduating from the police academy six years ago, he quickly achieved detective status and took part in a major drug-ring bust.

There's no doubt that he's tough. Flux wanted to find out how far street smarts and an admirable reputation get you against the machine. Is Officer Hill Newark's Lethal Enforcer?

FLUX: How similar is Lethal Enforcers to police academy training simulators?

JAMES HILL: To tell you the truth, most of the concepts in the game are taken from our simulations. It's almost identical. Even in the simulators, when you shoot bystanders, you don't get any points.

FLUX: Under what circumstances would you shoot someone?

HILL: If someone points a gun at me, I can shoot them. If someone uses deadly force on me and there is no other means to stop them, I'll shoot them. I shot at somebody once, but I missed him because kids nowadays wear oversized clothes. He was a skinny guy, and the bullet went through his shirt. I pray to God I don't have to shoot.

FLUX: Have you ever been shot at?

HILL: Once, when I was a rookie, as soon as I got on the force. There was a shootout in Newark. We didn't catch him—he got away. It's a scary feeling.

FLUX: How would you improve Lethal Enforcers to make it more realistic?

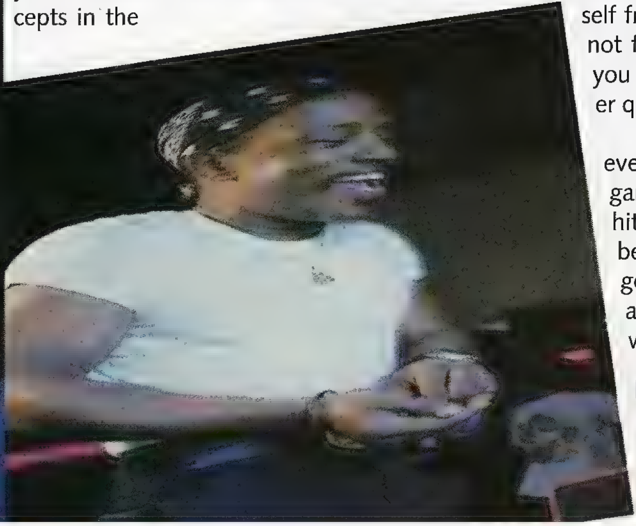
HILL: If you get shot, you should feel something—even if it's like a zap in the gun or a sting or something. It should remind you not to get shot. I'd also make the gun more realistic. The guys in the games have real guns, so why am I shooting with a big plastic pink thing? The pink and turquoise guns are cumbersome. Kids like realistic looking things.

In addition, as I've said earlier, kids wear oversized clothing. Maybe they could change the game so that baggy-clothed villains have to be hit dead center or else they get back up.

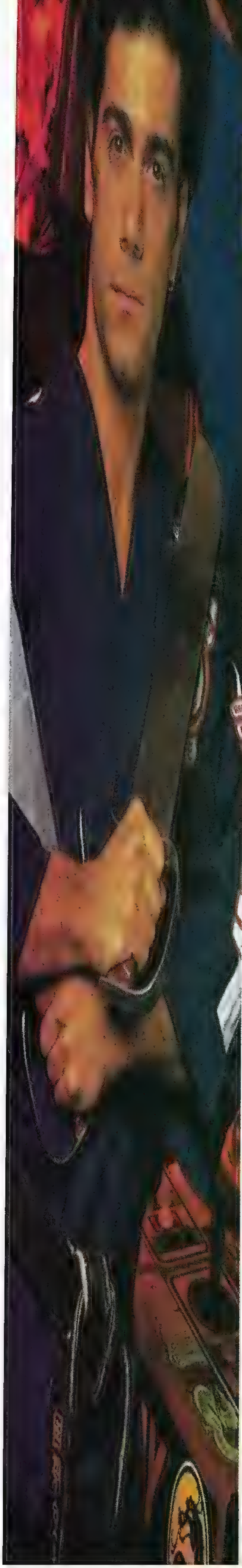
FLUX: How would you compare the anticipation players experience in the game with your experiences on the street?

HILL: When you're playing a game, you're playing for points. When you're out on the streets, you're not playing for points anymore. You have to separate yourself from the fantasy and the reality of it. It's not for points anymore—it's for real. When you get shot, ain't nobody going to put another quarter in there so you can get up again.

But then again, even on the streets, everything you do is a game. I try to win my game and he tries to win his game. If I get hit, he wins. If I shoot him, I win. But, believe me, when I'm out on the streets, I'm going to win my game, get the high points and go home that night. I don't play to win, I play to live.



INTERVIEW BY KENNETH LI
PHOTOS BY JOHN DOLAN



Chris Casamassa

PLAYS MORTAL KOMBAT

✦ Top ranked (#1) competitor in the open forms division of the North American Sports Karate Association (1990, 1991, 1992, 1993)

Chris Casamassa is no new jack to Mortal Kombat: He's fought and beaten the Kombatants in real life—not Scorpion or Liu Kang, but the actual cast. As the number one-ranked martial arts expert in the open forms division of the North American Sports Karate Association for the last four years, Casamassa has competed face to face agaist Daniel Pesina, who plays Scorpion, Sub-Zero and Johnny Cage; and Ho Sung Pak, of Liu Kang fame. Open forms is the division where anything goes. "You can use weapons, open-hand routines, music or gymnastics," Casamassa explains. "It's a very tough division." Well, he might have bested Pesina within the pseudo-real confines of the ring, but on the Mortal Kombattleground, needless to say, he gets beaten every time.

02 WINS
00 WINS
FIGHT!!

FLUX: How did you fare in the game?

CHRIS CASAMASSA: I do okay. I'm better on my Sega Genesis home version than on in the actual arcade game. My favorite character is Raiden.

FLUX: Why?

CASAMASSA: He's got a lot of cool moves; he's got the lightning throw, he's got the torpedo dive, jumping thrust kick, upper cut. His character uses a combination of many of the game's moves, plus he's got that mystical thing. It's kind of neat.

FLUX: What did you think of the game? How realistic is it?

CASAMASSA: It's pretty realistic in the martial arts aspect. Many of the moves that the characters do are actual martial arts moves. They used real life characters dressed up in costumes to do the moves and then just copied them into computer graphics. I know a couple of the guys they used as models for the game, Daniel Pesina and Ho Sung Pak.

FLUX: What kind of styles do they use?

CASAMASSA: The styles that Daniel and Ho Sung use are an eclectic blend of Wu Shu, which is a Chinese-style of martial arts, plus some Korean Tae Kwon Do. Many martial arts moves are common to a lot of styles. For example, a front kick can be found in a Japanese-style, a Chinese-style and a Korean-style. There are certain moves in particular that certain styles have that others don't. For example, Tae Kwon Do has a lot of jumping kicks, whereas the Japanese style uses more punches and elbows. The Chinese influence shows up in circular redirectional blocks and some of the swinging strikes.

FLUX: Have you ever competed in real life against Daniel Pesina?

CASAMASSA: Yes.

FLUX: Did you win?

CASAMASSA: Yes.

02 WINS
00 WINS
FINISH HIM!!

FLUX: How about in the game?

CASAMASSA: No. In the game, he kills me every time.

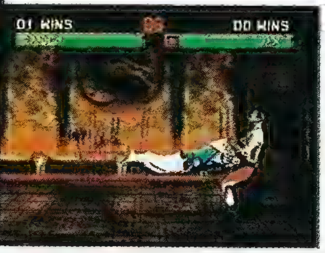
FLUX: How does it feel?

CASAMASSA: Well, I just keep putting those quarters in and keep trying to best him, but it's hard.

FLUX: Have you ever competed with Ho Sung Pak?

CASAMASSA: Yes. I think I only beat him once out of the seven times that we met in competition.

FLUX: Would you like to be in the next Mortal Kombat ?

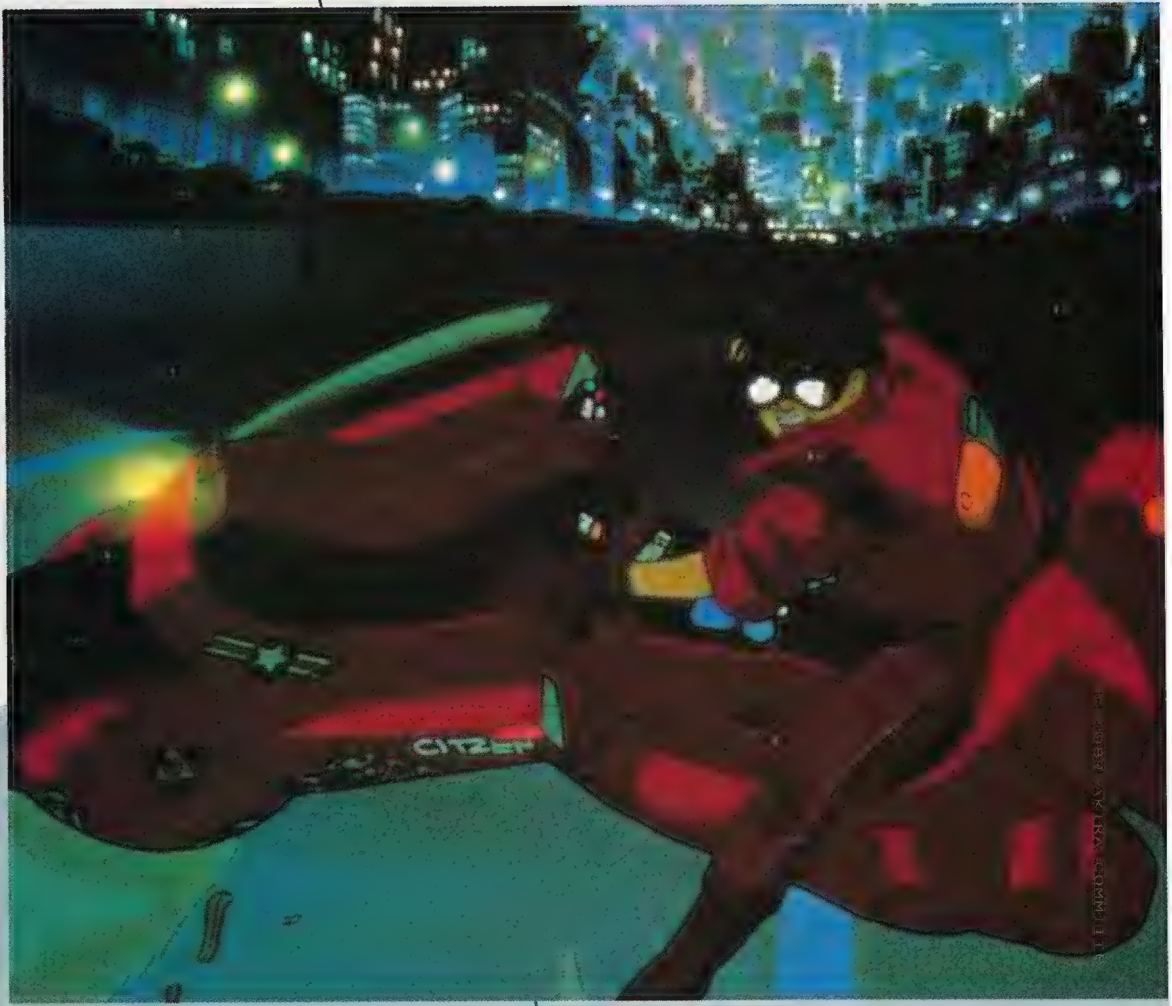


CASAMASSA: I'd love to be in the game. I'd like to be a Red Dragon fighter. Firebreathing could be one of my special powers.

INTERVIEW BY KENNETH LI PHOTOS BY MARCUS CUFF

Akira '94

NeoTokyo is about to EXPLODE. Again.


© 1988 AKIRA COMMITTEE

THOSE OF YOU who remember *Akira* from its first theatrical release in 1991 are probably still reeling from the wreckage. Over two hours in length, this Japanese animation — which required the development of new technologies just to produce — featured scenes of destruction not matched in any movie, animated or live action. Now *Akira* is back in full force, with a new full-screen video release, a video game and new comic books and trading cards.

Set in the not-so-distant years following World War III, *Akira* takes place in a rebuilt but unimproved Tokyo—where teenage motorcycle gangs, wired on adrenaline and ultraviolence, battle for turf and honor, where the government performs horrific experiments on children to release their dormant mental powers, and where fanatical cultists, desperate for even the most fleeting chance at a future, await the second coming of a psychic messiah known only as...Akira.

Into this background of urban decay and technological menace comes Tetsuo, a young motorpunk whose hidden psychic powers bloom as the result of a run-in with a mutant runaway. Kidnapped by the government, Tetsuo's powers grow until not even he can control them. Soon he begins to strike back at a world that has abused him since birth, moving towards a final conflict with the hibernating Akira—a conflict that may mean the end, not just of NeoTokyo, but of the Universe. Kay, a cute young rebel, and Kaneda, Tetsuo's former best friend, are all that stand in his path. Place your bets.

Home video fans can check their local video store or comic shop for the Akira video (which features new, cooler packaging). And later this year, video game makers THQ will be releasing *Akira: The Game*—a true-to-the-movie arcade-style adventure that puts you at ground zero of the film's psychic holocaust. The game gives you the opportunity to play most of the movie's major characters. Kaneda the motorpunk goes head to head and cycle to cycle against his archrivals, the Clown Gang; an injured Tetsuo must escape from a military hospital; Kaneda and Kay race against time and their enemies in a thrilling air-sled battle through the sewers of NeoTokyo; and, finally, the climax—Tetsuo

BY JEFF YANG

battles the army, Kaneda battles mutant creatures...and Akira? Akira obliterates everything.

"When I first saw *Akira*, I fell in love," says THQ vice-president Larry Siegel. "I thought it was the best animated production I'd ever seen—and it had 'video game' written all over it. Our game will offer an enormous variety of play elements, and it will have a Japanese animation look and feel, which we thought was critical."

Also preserved is the in-your-face violence of the film—at least in the Sega version. "The Sega version will go out with a warning: MA-13," says Siegel. "Nintendo operates on more of a censorship system, so it'll be a tamer version. Our interest was in making a good video game, not a violent one. For a game to play well, you clearly have to hit the bad guys, but you *don't* have to beat the shit out of them and watch them bleed to death."

Akira: The Game will soon be out for both the Super Nintendo and Sega Genesis, and will be released on Sega CD by Christmas and IBM CD the following spring. "The CD versions will use actual footage from the film, with subtitles and digitized voices and so on," says Siegel. "They'll have the actual soundtrack from the movie, and a few more levels of gameplay. We expect them to be vastly superior."

Meanwhile, for you videophobic *Akira* fans, Epic/Marvel Comics will tie up the loose ends of its English-translated series with a string of releases that will finish off the 1800-page, 38-volume trade paperback compilation—culminating in a special 39th tribute issue next March. In addition, Cornerstone will simultaneously put out a set of full-color trading cards with scenes and information from the film, including never-before-published, behind-the-scenes cells and sketches.

This all should appease the *Akira*-obsessed until the next infusion of psychopunk horror—a live-action version of the film, currently rumored to be in the works. How many times can one city explode, anyway?

ANIME "MUST SEES"

FEATURES:

Akira
The Wings Of Honneamise
Nausicaä Of The Valley Of The Winds
Laputa
Arion
Macross The Movie (Obuete Imasuka)
Harmageddon
Lensman
Supernatural Beast City
Venus Wars

ORIGINAL VIDEO ANIMATION:

Ranma 1/2
Bubblegum Crisis
Gal Force
Vampire Hunter D
Those Obnoxious Aliens (Urusei Yutsura)
Guyver
Project A-Ko
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STANDARD STAGE DIVE MANEUVERS

1) THE KERRIGAN KRAWL Aim for a large hole in the crowd or somewhere off to the extreme side. When you hit the floor, grab your left knee, start crying and scream, "Why me? Why me?"

2) THE DOUBLE AXL ROSE Dive headfirst into the crowd and start punching out anyone with a camera. Second choice: punch out any security guard who looks at you cross-eyed.

3) DIET GRRRL SPECIAL For large, economy, and carnival-sideshow sized women only. **1.** Push worthless men out of your way. **2.** Stand defiantly at center stage while quoting Oprah. **3.** Hurtle your girdle into the male-oppressor-dominated pit.

4) THE HALF VEDDER Climb onto PA stacks or side monitors, thump your chest in smug indignation, then execute a half-twist into the crowd right before the song's crescendo. A full Vedder routine is commonly known as "You Can't Bring Me Up."

5) THE BOBBITT TUCK Cut sharply across the stage while clutching your crotch and screaming like a madman. Then leap head-first into the startled crowd, keeping your hands glued to your groceries. Twist in mid air; you'll want to land face-up so that when they scrape you off the floor, you can utter the immortal line, "I felt a tug." Works great at Shonen Knife concerts.

6) THE BON VOYAGE A stage dive honoring the late AC/DC singer Bon Scott. Done almost exclusively to "Highway To Hell," this tribute requires you to choke, vomit all over yourself, then trip blindly off the stage. R.I.P.

7) THE YMCA Cannonball.

enough to have a few moments to spare, try and do as much damage as possible. Step on effects pedals, crash into a rack mount, spill a Cherry Coke into the synth stack, knock over the kick-drum mic, and, if you wanna have some real fun, knee the bass player in the balls. This is guaranteed to make a lasting impression on any band, as well as on your forehead and stomach when that malevolent roadie actually catches up with you.

3) GET AIRBORNE.

To achieve maximum altitude, use the front monitors to launch. Most vocalists consider this a violation of their personal space and will offer an unsolicited boot up your ass to make this point clear.

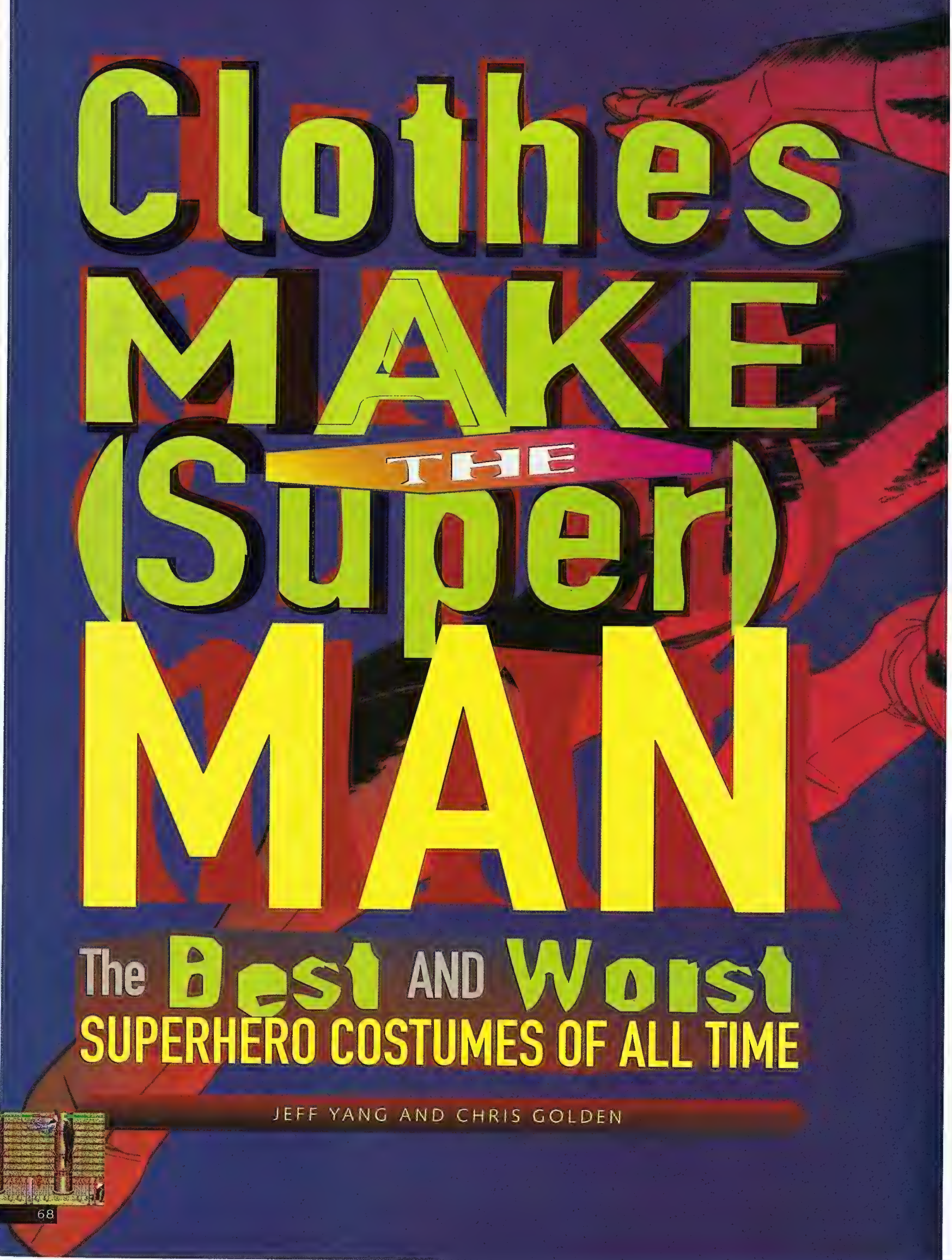
4) NO HEAD-FIRST DIVES!

If you're a beginner and haven't perfected the right-shoulder rollout, do *not* dive head first. After you've had a few skull/concrete impact craters, you will eventually learn that, while it's cool to let everyone see your love of music etched deeply and permanently in your kisser, it is also quite painful.

5) STUDY THE PROS.

If you see the same dude making it to the stage six or seven times during the same song, pay close attention. He obviously knows what he's doing. Oh, sure, security will probably beat the living hell out of him when they finally catch him, the annoying fuck. But, hey, stage divers aren't motivated by anything but glory. Also, it has been scientifically proven that chicks dig that kind of thing.

A FEW FINAL TIPS: while onstage, do not try to shake hands with the guitar player. He's busy. And don't try to accompany the singer in a duet. That's what the rest of the band is for. Also, keep in mind that stage diving is not an Olympic competition, so unless you're a seasoned veteran with 12 mangled Slayer shirts, a permanently concave forehead, and at least three barricade scars to prove it, don't try anything too artsy. No double somersaults, no jackknives, no *Swan Lake*; just get up there, do your thing, and jump off—preferably feet first. This way, if you manage to land on some guy's girlfriend, at least you'll have a running start.



Clothes MAKE THE (Super) MAN

The Best AND Worst SUPERHERO COSTUMES OF ALL TIME

JEFF YANG AND CHRIS GOLDEN

LET'S FACE IT: Whether you're a friendly neighborhood webslinger or a grim and gritty crusader of the night, if you're a superhero, **YOU ARE WHAT YOU WEAR.** It doesn't matter how much adamantium you have in your bones, how powerful your optic blasts are, or how quickly your urine eats through sheet metal: If your costume sucks, you won't get the super-respect you deserve. And you probably won't be asked to join any cool team-ups, either. (Maybe a one-shot crossover with Captain Planet and the Planeteers, if you're lucky.)

LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT ONE EXAMPLE:

After accidentally consuming an experimental cosmic cinnamon bun, Joe Mamma gains the proportionate strength of a really stale cruller. As usual, he decides to use his powers in the fight for truth, justice, the American way, etc. He dons the costume of Pastry Chief, The Crepe Crusader, which consists of a Lycra-Spandex wrestling singlet, a frilly white apron, and a big, floppy, mushroom-shaped hat. Plus green ankle boots.

Does he get props from his super-peers? Does he get adoring front-page coverage in the *Daily Planet*? Does he get the key to the city? Yeah, right. He gets arrested for deviant behavior. Unloved, unappreciated, and driven to alcoholism by the mockery of small children, Mighty Joe Mamma dies on Skid Row by issue five.

Okay. Five years later, the huge, money-sucking publisher of *Pastry Chief*, Barbell Comics, decides to revamp the concept and

Comics, decides to revamp the concept and re-release it—this time turning Joe Mamma into a dark anti-hero, hell-bent for blood and revenge:

Now Joe Mamma is a Vietnam vet, subjected to grotesque experiments by military scientists seeking to create an indestructible super-soldier: a human Twinkie. Fleeing the experiment, which involves giving him a radioactive-cream enema, he makes a vow at the grave of his World War I–vet father to hunt down his corrupt former superiors—and anyone else who gets in his way—as Doughboy the Vigilante. His costume consists of a sleek black bodysuit, crossed chrome bandoleers, a heavy leather jacket with lots of useless buckles and zippers, knee-high combat boots and a carbine the size of Mt. Rushmore. First ish, "Butcher, Baker....Life Taker" sells out in regular, premium, and unleaded editions. Barbell instantly begins merchandising action figures and a movie adaptation.

Clothes make the man. Let's face it, if Aquaman were introduced today, his costume would be the kiss of death. His powers are already somewhat crappy: he can summon dolphins and swim incredibly fast, both less-than-useful skills in your typical urban setting. And the guy wears a sequined, skin-tight orange shirt with a wide neckline that just screams "Disco is my life!" Plus green tights. He looks like the poster-boy for Tropicana orange juice. And like most other male superheroes, he has no visible bulge at his crotch. On him, however, it seems appropriate.

So what is it that makes certain superhero costumes crucially cool and others lamer than a broke-leg dog? Here's a list of basic criteria:

1) In most cases, *simpler* means *better*. If your costume looks as if you spend more time trying to put it on than actually fighting crime, think again.

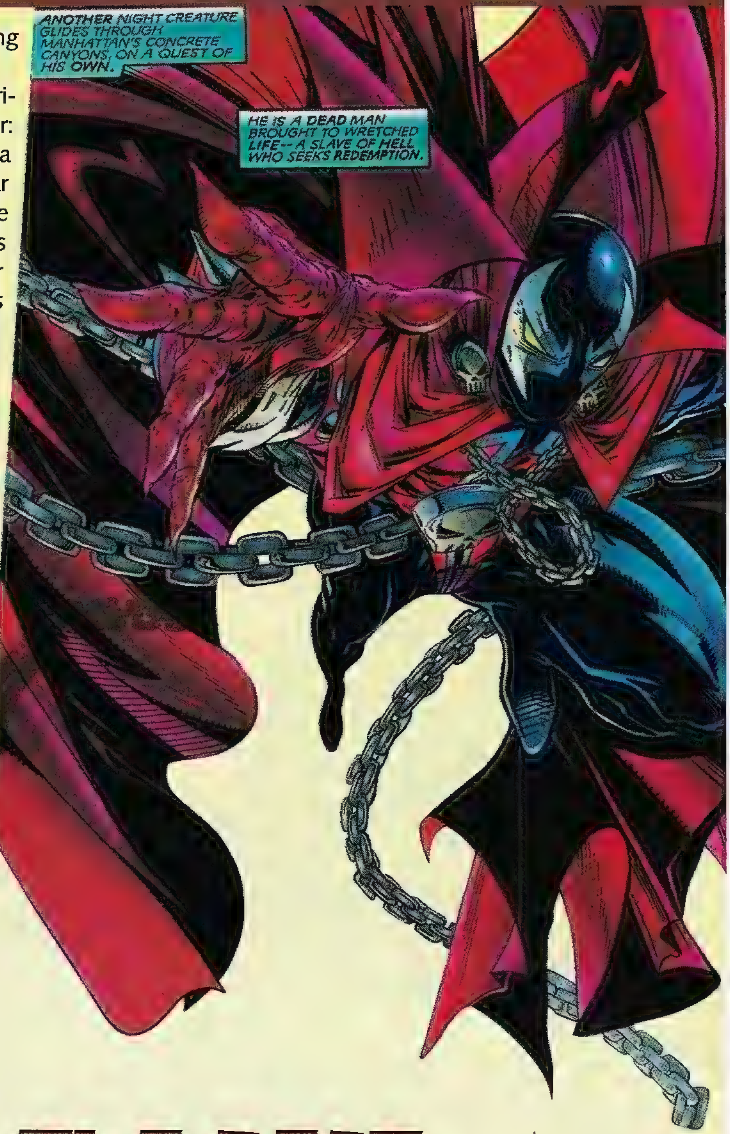
2) Originality helps. Just because Superman has a cape doesn't mean you have to have a cape. If Superman jumped into a black hole, would you do it too? Also, funky accessories help: a flaming sword, a bazooka, a live serpent draped around your neck like an aviator scarf, etc.

3) The mask thing. Go with a full-face mask (like Spawn, the Black Panther, Iron Man) or no mask at all. Half-masks with cowls that expose your brutish, lantern-like (or vixen-y) jaw can work for some—Batman, for instance—but this is the exception, not the rule. What about a little Lone Ranger eye-mask (Green Arrow *and* Green Lantern, which explains a lot)? NO! NO! NO!

3a) No ankle boots.

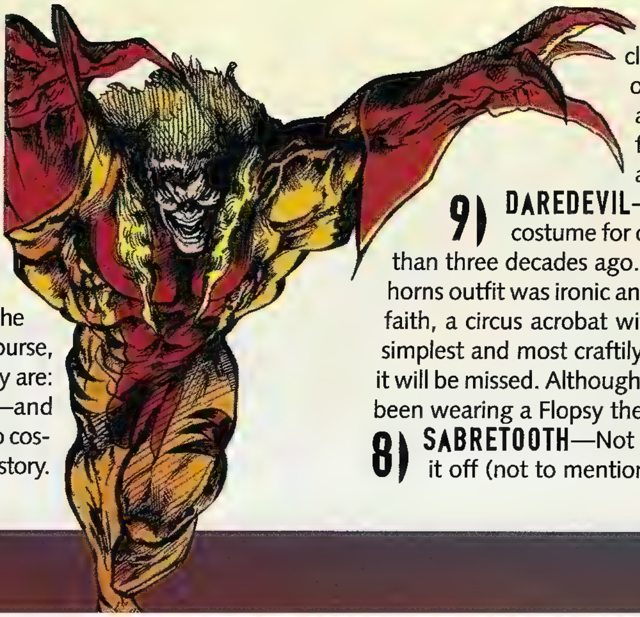
4) Be classy. It's fine to ignore the laws of physics—hell, the Puzzling Gravity-Free Boob Factor (PGFBF) is one of the things that makes comics truly meaningful—but that doesn't mean your heroine should be forced to fight crime in a pair of metallic pasties and an artfully placed postage stamp. Not *all* grim 'n' gritty male heroes require permanent five o' clock shadow. And exposed chest hair is disgusting and a fire hazard.

Of course, this isn't an exact science. There's a *je ne sais quoi*, a *savoir faire*, a *jean luc picard* surrounding the very coolest costumes. But the best way of demonstrating the above points is, as always, by example. With that in mind, we sifted through our extensive comic book collections and picked out the good, the bad, and, of course, the ugly. Here they are: the 10 best—and worst—superhero costumes in comics history.


ANOTHER NIGHT CREATURE GLIDES THROUGH MANHATTAN'S CONCRETE CANYONS, ON A QUEST OF HIS OWN.
HE IS A DEAD MAN BROUGHT TO WRETCHED LIFE-- A SLAVE OF HELL WHO SEEKS REDEMPTION.

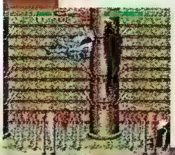
THE BEST

10) **SPAWN**—Costumes all too often fall into the dreaded "mix 'n' match" trap, in which underpaid artists who've inhaled too much aerosol spray glue simply toss together a tried, true and tired set of accessories, scars, tattoos and body parts. Presto! Stamp that sucker in gold foil. The results can be horrific—Dress-Up Barbie on anabolic steroids—or they can be, well, kinda cool. Spawn's 'drobe is in the latter category: classic Superhero™ red and blue tights, a big ol' Dr. Strange cape, Ghost Rider's chain-and-skulls kit—it works, and you won't confuse this homeless advocate from hell with any other hero.



9) **DAREDEVIL**—The Man Without Fear has changed his costume for only the second time since his creation more than three decades ago. Too bad. His classic red-tights-and-teeny-horns outfit was ironic and streamlined—the devil as defender of the faith, a circus acrobat with ass-kicking potential. It was one of the simplest and most craftily symbolic costumes in Marvel history, and it will be missed. Although, to be sure, the guy's blind—he could have been wearing a Flopsy the Clown outfit and not known it.

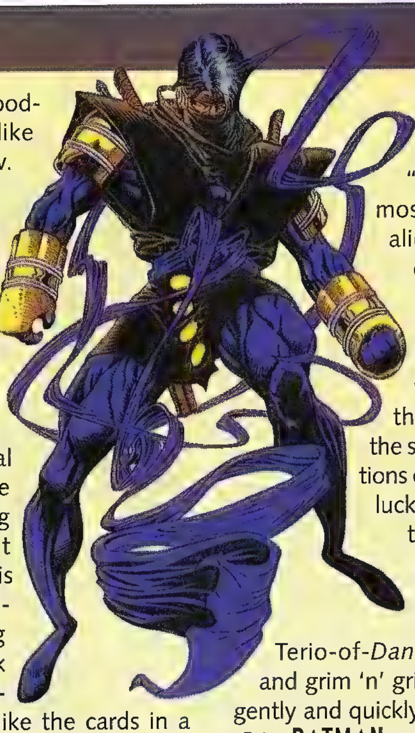
8) **SABRETOOTH**—Not many people can wear a fur ruff and carry it off (not to mention mutton-chop sideburns); Mr. Tooth does



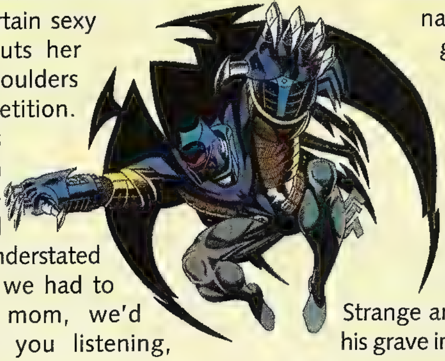
it with panache, proving through sheer, red-eyed menace that *this* former villain and current X-Man is more than just one in an army of Wolverine clones.

7) NINJAK— Valiant has come up with a lot of mediocre costumes, several really boring ones, and a couple that were truly awful (see the next page). Recently, thanks to artist Joe Quesada, they've struck gold with the first really classy rendition of the "bad-ass ninja superhero" look—something that Image and Marvel have been trying to perfect for years. With Ninjak, Valiant beats them to the punch.

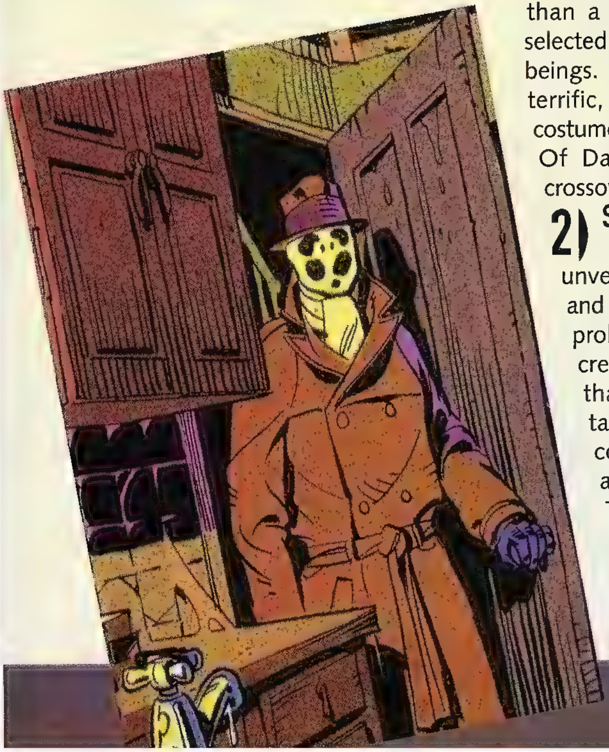
6) AZRAEL— Another Quesada triumph, even if it is a little overwrought. The mystery, symbolism and sheer visual power of Azrael's costume makes one hope that, if (when!) Bruce Wayne finally takes up the mantle of the Bat again, Azrael will pull his original outfit out of cold storage, too.



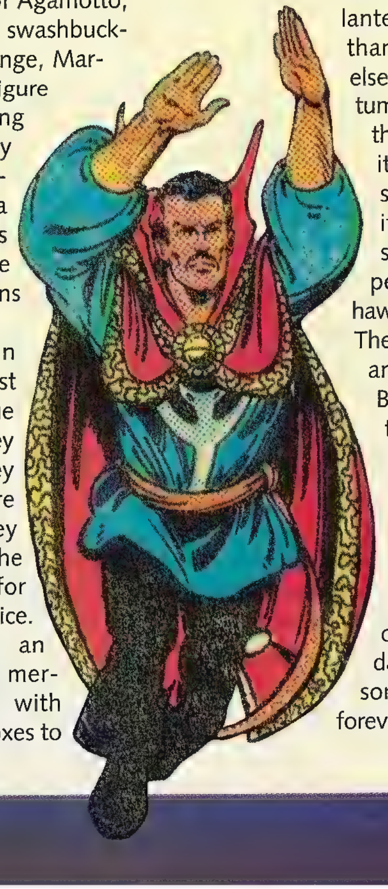
5) MYSTIQUE— Okay, so she's not exactly a heroine. And she doesn't exactly have a costume. But her look projects a certain sexy arrogance that puts her head-and-bare-shoulders above the competition. Basic white works better for her than anyone in the Marvel Universe, and her skull motif is understated and disturbing. If we had to date someone's mom, we'd choose her. Are you listening, Nightcrawler?



4) RORSCHACH— Not a costume so much as an attitude and a nasty smell, Rorschach's "Will fight crime for Prozac" outfit hearkens back to the trenchcoat-and-fedora 'drobes of '40s pulp crusaders, dark and brooding types like The Shadow. What makes Alan Moore's Watchman antihero special, however, is his mask. Shaped from an experimental double-layered material filled with some kind of moving colored gel, it transforms his face into a constantly changing splatter of black on a field of featureless white—like the cards in a Rorschach test, hence the name. (Duh.) Another great mask is that of DC's The Question, which leaves him with no face at all.



3) DOCTOR STRANGE— Far from simple, the footsie pajamas and puffy blue smock worn by Doctor Strange are, instead, a reflection of his grave importance within the Marvel Universe. Is it the slash of white at his temples or the pencil-thin mustache? Whatever. Combined with his Eye of Agamotto, his Cloak of Levitation, and his swashbuckling red sash, Dr. Stephen Strange, Marvel's Sorcerer Supreme, cuts a figure far more enigmatic and dashing than a dozen other randomly selected leotard-wearing superbeings. "Dark Strange" wore a terrific, twisted version of this costume at the end of the "Siege Of Darkness" Midnight Sons crossover.



2) SUPERMAN— When Siegel and Schuster first unveiled Superman's red, blue and gold tights and cape, they probably didn't realize they created something more than just an outfit—they tapped into a need in the collective unconscious for an icon of truth and justice. They also spawned an immensely profitable merchandising bonanza, with products from lunchboxes to Underoos now bearing the gold and red stylized "S" of the world's most famous illegal alien. Sure, he's an overhyped goody-two-shoes; but his simple and powerful look has survived fiftysomething years, setting the standard for generations of heroes since. And luckily, a stylistic hiccup that gave one of the post-Resurrection Supermen an annoying, Danny Terio-of-*Dance Fever* hairstyle and grim 'n' gritty black outfit was gently and quickly forgotten.

1) BATMAN—The shadow of the Bat. Drawn starkly across the night sky, the silhouette alone—as much a part of the city as the scum in the gutters and the rats in the attic—is enough to make evildoers quake, and the citizenry look up in awe and caution. Unlike Superman's sunny, patriotic outfit, the costume of the Batman refuses to comfort: it chills even those on the right side of the law. It is a symbol of eternal vigilance and icy revenge. The one, the original Dark Knight is more fearful than any number of gun-wielding self-styled vigilantes, and more than anything else, it's the costume that creates this image, with its sweeping, stylized cape, its demon-spawn ear-peaks and hawk-nosed cowl. The new costume and the new Batman it contains will pass into memory, like Pet Rocks, hula hoops and mood rings — a fading fad. The original tall, dark, and gruesome visage is forever.

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THE WORST

10) DEATHSTROKE—Three words: boring, boring and boring. 'Nuff said.

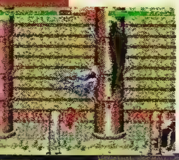
9) THE HULK—Top scientific minds are still working on the question of why an overdose of gamma radiation causes the mysterious side effect of turning any outfit worn by the victim into a pair of raggy purple pants.

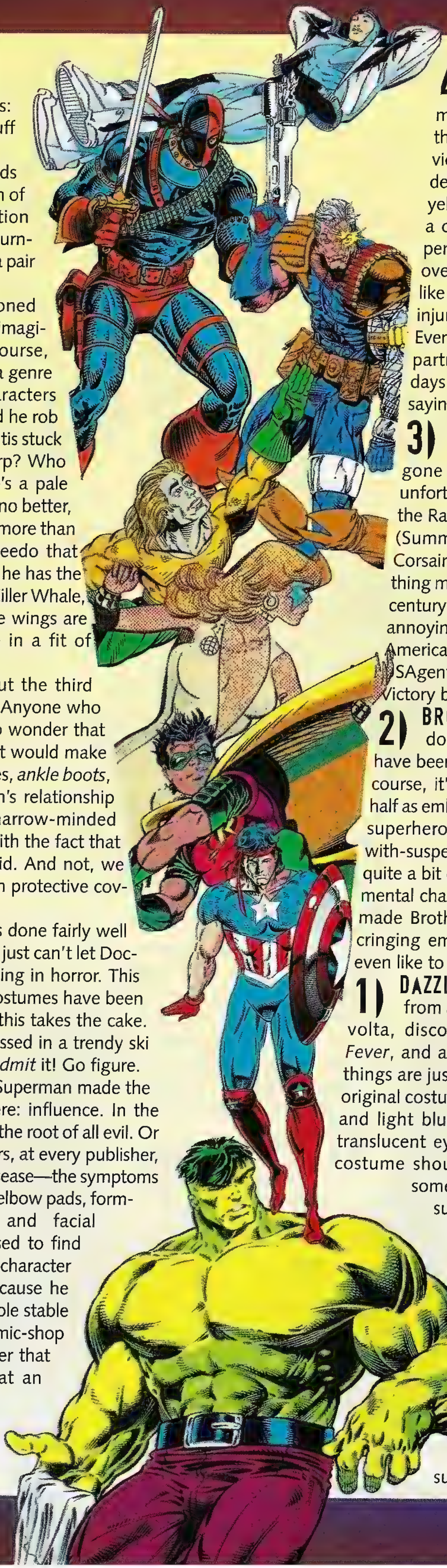
8) AQUAMAN—As we mentioned before, Aquadude's duds lack imagination, class and, of course, masculinity—which is saying a lot in a genre where 90 percent of the male characters prance around in long underwear. Did he rob an underseas Salvation Army? Is Atlantis stuck in some sort of bizarre '70s time warp? Who knows? Of course, the character he's a pale ripoff of, Marvel's Sub-Mariner, fares no better, skipping around the globe in nothing more than oversized armbands and a green Speedo that gets smaller every year. And it's lucky he has the proportionate strength of Shamu the Killer Whale, because by all rights those little ankle wings are enough to make Galactus collapse in a fit of uncontrollable giggling.

7) ROBIN—The best thing about the third Robin, Tim Drake, is his pants. Anyone who tells you anything else is lying. It's no wonder that the earlier versions, with Speedos that would make Namor cringe, skinny little legs, and, yes, *ankle boots*, invited speculation as to the Batman's relationship with his "ward." Never mind the narrow-minded whispering. We're more concerned with the fact that the costume was bad, ugly and stupid. And not, we might add, exactly the cutting edge in protective covering, either.

6) DOCTOR MIRAGE—Valiant has done fairly well in the costume category, but we just can't let Doctor Mirage swoop by without screaming in horror. This costume sucks! Granted, superhero costumes have been copied from odd sources before, but this takes the cake. Consider: Valiant has a superhero dressed in a trendy ski suit and ski boots, and they actually *admit* it! Go figure.

5) CABLE—For the same reason Superman made the "Best" list, Cable shows up here: influence. In the world of superhero costumes, Cable is the root of all evil. Or lots of evil, anyway. So many characters, at every publisher, have since been infected with Cable Disease—the symptoms being huge guns, giant shoulder-knee-elbow pads, form-fitting armor, one-eye sparkles, and facial scars—that fans would be hard-pressed to find anything original left in Rob Liefeld's character design. And it's partially his fault, because he himself cannibalized the look for a whole stable of Image characters. A quick scan of comic-shop shelves would convince a rookie reader that Cable outfits are available at an interdimensional Kmart somewhere, on blue-light special. The look has moved beyond tired, into exhausted.





4) IRON FIST—Of all the lame costumes of the '70s, none was more unwelcome upon its return than that of martial-arts whiz (and fashion victim) Iron Fist. The character is burdened with an open-to-the-navel, ugly, yellow-and-green sashed number with a collar so high it's got to impede his peripheral vision. The doo-rag he wears over his head and eyes makes him look like he's recovering from a bad cranial injury. And jeez, the guy wears *slippers*. Even the awful blaxploitation costume his partner, Luke Cage, wore back in the days of polyester isn't as bad. And that's saying a lot.

3) MAJOR VICTORY—The leader of the Guardians of the Galaxy has gone through a series of increasingly unfortunate costume changes. First of all, the Ramboesque headband has got to go. (Summers patriarch/Starjammers leader Corsair, take note.) Second, the jacket/vest thing makes him look like Liberace Jr. in 21st century Las Vegas. Finally—and this is *really* annoying—underneath it all it's just Captain America's costume! Even lifeless Cap-clone USAgent has his own costume! Does Major Victory buy secondhand, or what?

2) BROTHER VOODOO—In the '70s, the double entendre of his name might have been thought painfully clever. Today, of course, it's merely racist. But the name isn't half as embarrassing as Jericho Drumm, Ph.D.'s superhero/voodoo priest, African-pajamas-with-suspenders outfit. In fact, though there is quite a bit of untapped potential in the fundamental character, the name and costume have made Brother Voodoo one of Marvel's great cringing embarrassments. Editors there don't even like to discuss him.

1) DAZZLER—It was a sign of the times, from a decade that brought us John Travolta, disco, roller boogie, *Saturday Night Fever*, and a host of similar horrors. But some things are just plain unforgivable, and Dazzler's original costume is one of them. Sparkling white and light blue, with bell-bottom pants, weird translucent eye patches, and *roller skates*, this costume should have spelled her doom—but somehow, mutant/Barbie clone Dazzler survived. Rumors that the costume's original designer was flogged to death with a copy of Olivia Newton John's *Xanadu* have, unfortunately, been exposed as false. Still, every artist in the Marvel bullpen should be forced to wear this outfit for one day out of every year as a reminder of the truly awful crimes that can be perpetrated in the name of superhero style.

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top ten tips for t

Mortal Kombat. Aladdin. NBA Jam. You got 'em, you play 'em, you love 'em. And no doubt you've found, shall we say, a few-less-than ethical ways to beat these and your other favorite video games. To the hard core, the following slew of codes, tips and tricks may be common knowledge. But common knowledge isn't always so common. And all this juicy info has never been put together in one handy list. So read on and see if you really do know all there is to know about these ten modern gaming greats.

MORTAL KOMBAT

SNES/Game Boy (Acclaim), Genesis/Game Gear (Arena)

1. The "DULLARD" code (Genesis/Sega CD): At the Game Start/Options screen, press Down, Up, Left, Left, Button A, Right, Down. The words "Cheat Enabled" will appear, allowing you access to the hidden programmer's screen. Flags 0 and 1 make easy victories for players 1 and 2, respectively. Flag 2 turns on the Reptile beacon moon characters; Flag 3 puts a mysterious face and the initials BYC on the moon instead. Flag 4 turns on the Reptile's cryptic messages, Flag 5 gives you unlimited continues, Flag 6 turns on computer fatalities and Flag 7 keeps the fight in The Courtyard. The Sega CD flags are labeled as to what they do, but Flag 3—"Dads"—changes the names of the players each round, and Flag 7 activates a Turbo speed option. The 1st Map option chooses your starting background, Demo lets you view the bios and endings for each character, and 1 and 2 "Play Chop" controls how often you get to "Test Your Might."

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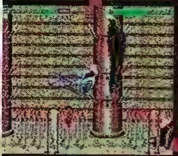
2. As Scorpion, throw a harpoon, uppercut, teleport punch, foot sweep and repeat. This can wear your opponent down fast!

3. To call Reptile out for a one-on-one match, beat any computer opponent on the Pit stage (without pushing block) and execute the finishing move. If you score a "Double Flawless" victory (meaning you don't get hit at ALL during the match), you'll get to fight Reptile. You can play at any skill level, but if your favorite character uses block in their fatality, you'll have to choose another. If you're good enough to pull this off (the "DULLARD" Genesis/Sega CD code makes this easy by turning Flags 0 and 2 "on" and choosing the Pit as your 1st Map), you'll rumble with the Reptile in the bottom of the spike-filled Pit.

4. Blood (SNES): Game Genie (GG) code for red sweat: BDB4-DD07

5. Play as Goro (Game Boy): When you defeat Shang Tsung and win the game, wait for the credits to roll. When "THE END" appears, hold the D-pad to the upper left corner while holding Select and button A. When you're asked to enter your initials, put in a single "A." Then press Start when the high score table appears. The screen will show Goro with the message "Goro Lives...As You..." and all your opponents will have new names!

6. Blood Code (Genesis/Game Gear): For a bloody good game, enter the buttons A, B, A, C, A, B, and B on Genesis and 2, 1, 2, Down and Up on the Game Gear at the Code Of Honor screen.



7. A simple strategy for fighting Shang Tsung: At the opening of the round, duck and let him shoot fireballs over your head. After three or four, Tsung will charge you. Uppercut him, and you should be able to keep the advantage through the rest of the match.

8. Remember, both Goro and Shang Tsung are impervious to foot sweeps, and Johnny Cage can't use his Split Punch against Sonya or himself.

9. Game Gear: GG code 004-2D6-19E gives you infinite credits.

10. It's more a glitch than a tip, but if you fight the Reptile in an Endurance match, you'll get to fight a second "Reptile." Whichever warrior was the second fighter in the Endurance match will appear after the proper Reptile has been defeated. They'll look all mangled and green, but, like the real Reptile, they have the abilities of more than one fighter. To see what these "second Reptiles" look like without actually playing the match, hit Start on the other controller during a Reptile fight. The characters will be covered in green garbage at the Player Select screen.

NBA JAM

SNES (Acclaim), Genesis (Arena)

1. Powerup Fire: At the Tonight's Matchup Screen, press B seven times then hold Up, B and C on the Genesis or Up, B and Y on the SNES until the tip-off. This puts you on fire the whole game!

2. Powerup Turbo+Dunk: Rotate the D-pad clockwise, and hit any SNES or Genesis button 12 times. Then stop rotating and hold A, B, and C on Genesis and A, B, and Y on SNES. This will powerup both Turbo + Dunk, giving you unlimited turbo speed and dunks from half-court.

3. To play as NBA Jam arcade designer Mark Turmell—the strongest player in the game—enter the initials M and J normally, then enter the T while holding Start and A on the Genesis, or Buttons L, R and Select on the SNES. Turmell can do all the dunks and is super-quick besides.

4. Legendary Parliament/Funkadelic bandleader George "P-Funk" Clinton is another secret character—enter D and I, then enter S while holding Start and C on the Genesis or L, R, Select and X on the SNES.

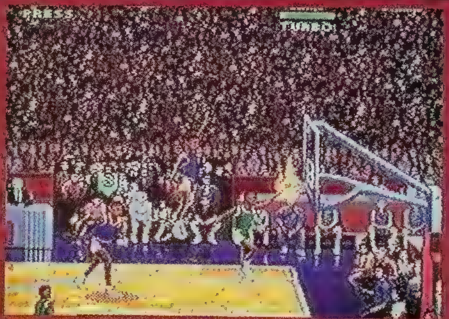
5. The other Clinton, Bill, is a pretty good three-point shooter. Enter A and R, then the letter K using the above entry methods with A for Genesis and X for SNES.

6. Oilers Q-back Warren Moon pops up when you use the same formula, but with the initials UW_ (space). Enter the space with button A on both systems.

7. To see the shooting percentage for each field goal or three-pointer you launch—crucial to mastering individual characters—press any button once then hold Down, A and B on both SNES and Genesis. A small percentage will appear in the lower right corner of the screen, and you can find the court's hot spots where you shoot the best.

8. GG Powerup Fire: D6E9-CD18 (SNES) or BWPV-4A7C (Genesis).

9. Juice Mode: Have a need for speed? At the Matchup screen, hit any button 13 times, then hold B and X for the SNES and B and C for the Genesis. This puts the game into "Juice Mode," where everyone moves twice as fast.



10. Become versatile with a number of squads, not just the Hornets and Knicks. The oft-maligned Dallas Mavericks have the best defense in the game, plus Jackson is great at shooting threes. If you're looking for a good offensive drive, try the Sacramento or Denver By using less popular squads, you'll be able to surprise other players into defeat!

ALADDIN

SNES (Capcom), Genesis (Sega/Virgin)

1. Debug Mode (Genesis): From the Options screen, enter A, C, A, C, A, C, A, C, B, B, B, B on your controller. Aladdin will say "Yeah!" and programmer David Perry's digitized face will appear with the words "Ah, David Perry, what is your wish?" From here, you can try any

e top ten games

level and access the map mode.

2. Defeat Jafar (Genesis): The best way to beat Jafar is to set up a pattern. You'll inevitably run out of apples and need more. Fire what you've got on you at Jafar, then jump over him and grab four more apples on the other side of the screen. If Jafar is still trying to control you with his staff, keep jumping away from him, toward the wall. Once Jafar turns into a snake, no place is safe from the fire. Just grab the apples and keep moving. Then pick a place, hurdle the licks of fire, and nail Jafar with the fruits of your labors. With patience and practice, you'll get him eventually.

3. Level Skip (Genesis): Pause the game at any time and enter A, B, B, A twice. You'll warp to the end of the current level.

4. Extra Life (Genesis): Locate the Mickey Mouse ears on the clothesline in The Desert and stop. When you're not moving, Aladdin will lean and look both ways. If you can position Aladdin so that when he leans, it looks like he's wearing the ears, you'll be rewarded with a 1-Up.

5. Access Level 7 (SNES): Go right to the last level with the following password: Aladdin, Jasmine, Abu, Sultan.

6. Free Lives (Genesis/SNES): On Genesis, the icon after Jafar is usually a 1-up., so hit the button when you see Jafar. In the SNES version, hit the button when the Genie blinks.

7. GG Infinite Lives: C221-4FA5 (SNES) or RGJB-Y6Z8 (Genesis).

8. GG Invincibility (Genesis): ATCB-0A24.

9. GG Unlimited Apples (Genesis): ATBV-0A5L—great for when you fight Jafar!

10. Extra Life (Genesis): Don't forget to check your back in The Desert, Level 2—head to the left instead of the right to find four apples and a 1-Up.

ETERNAL CHAMPIONS

Genesis (Sega)

1. Trident Overkill: In the background, you'll see a rock on the left and a mermaid statue on the right. Position your opponent in front of either object and attack from the outside (hitting them toward the center of the playfield) with C or Z. Tentacles appear from the deep waters, wrapping around your opponent and pulling them under, leaving only a pool of blood.

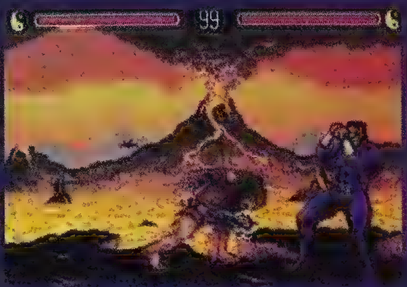
2. Midknight's Overkill: Place your opponent's knee on the right side of the doorway frame on the left-of-center shed ; your victim should be to your right. Hit C or Z; a helicopter will fly by, launch a rocket and blow your opponent to tiny, grisly bits.

3. Jetta Overkill: Position your opponent's head directly in front of either of the red columns closest to the center. Hit C or Z and the ground opens up to swallow your fallen foe.

4. Shadow Overkill: Standing to their right, align your opponent with the center neon letter. Hit C or Z, and they'll be knocked into the second neon letter (the one that looks kind of like an "L") and you get to watch them fry in the sign. Watch for the eyeball to fall out!

5. Blade Overkill: Position your opponent in front of the fan with their knee all the way over the black bar that's right next to the first set of windows on either side of the fan. Hit C or Z to send your opponent backwards into the fan; when they hit, a small item from their character is spit out onto the floor.

6. Slash Overkill: On the left side of the screen, there's a small rock with a flat surface on one side of the top. Align your opponent with that rock and hit them from the right with C or Z. A large dinosaur appears from the left to snack on the fallen warrior. Like Blade's Overkill, a token of the now-deceased character will be spit out by the dino.



7. Larcen's Overkill: Line up your opponent with either the "CH" or the "ER" in the phrase "CHICAGO THEATER." Hit them with C or Z, and a car will drive by and open fire on your unfortunate adversary.

8. Xavier Overkill: Align your opponent with the corner building in the background (that's the lightest-colored building, closest in perspective to the action, either side). Your opponent should be on the inside, closest to the fire. Hitting C or Z sends them into the flames, where they burn to a crisp. Oh, and watch for their skull to fall off, too.

9. RAX Overkill: Position your opponent in the middle of the large left spotlight shining on the floor. Stand to the opponent's left and press C or Z. Little robots fly in to freeze, disintegrate and sweep up the remains of your opponent.

10. GG owners can play as the Eternal Champion himself by entering BEHT-GAD4. Choose him with the left button.

LETHAL ENFORCERS

SNES/Genesis/Sega CD (Konami)

1. At the end of each level, aim for the boss' gun or hands—that way you stop his projectiles before they're launched, and you still score hits on him.

2. *Always* calibrate your gun before each game. If your arm is steady but your pistol shoots at 90 degree angles, what's the point?

3. Stand up. Yes! Stand, you lazy bum! In addition to retaining the feel of the arcade game, your accuracy will be greatly improved. If your TV is low to the ground, kneel.

4. In two player games, stick to your side of the screen. If both players are go after every enemy, you'll both get nailed in a hurry.

5. Shooting at the car tires on Level 1 is fun, but the cars don't go away with blown wheels—they keep going, but now they bounce up and down, making your targets harder to hit. So don't do it.

6. Enemies on the edges of the screen are hardest to hit; instead of aiming with your wrist, move your upper body, keeping your arms straight, and use the gun sight.

7. Only shoot the weapons powerups if you need them. If you reload your gun between every shot, don't bother with the automatic. If you're not too accurate, the rifle isn't the best choice—with each trigger pull, it scatters three bullets in the general vicinity of your target (not a good idea for stages with hostage situations!). Conversely, weapons with larger impact points, like the Magnum or shotgun, will help the less-accurate marksman nail targets with ease.

8. After the first level, don't believe everything you hear—from either the attackers or the victims. Some of the bad guys cry out for help, then shoot you.

9. Save the automatic powerup on the Level 2 subway train until the end. It doesn't disappear, and you'll need the multiple bullets for the boss.

1P 000000
CREDIT 05
2P 000000
PRESS START

10. If you're really desperate and need to cheat, press pause when each enemy appears. Get a bead on them, then unpause and shoot. It's time consuming, but it will get you to the next level if you're stuck.

SONIC 3/CD/ SPINBALL

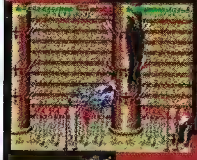
Genesis/Sega CD (Sega)

1. SPINBALL: Collect all the rings on any level, then look for the familiar large end-of-stage sparkling ring to get multi-ball!
2. SPINBALL: Game Genie code AXBA-4A4T gives you infinite lives.
3. SONIC 3: At the beginning of the Launch Base Zone, Act 2, drop down to the pipes and go right until you're in the water. To your left you'll find a Special Stage Ring.
4. SONIC 3: In the final battle against Robotnik, the Doc will appear in a domed rocket. Hit the dome with a Super Spin Attack four times, and one stage of the rocket will be destroyed. Super Spin Attack four more times and the rest is toast. When Robotnik enters the spike-covered ship, carefully Spin Attack the dome a few times to finish him off.
5. SONIC 3: Infinite lives are yours with the Game Gear password AJ3A-CA7A.
6. SONIC 3: With the GG code AWHA-CA92, Sonic won't lose his rings when he's hit.

7. CD: At the Main Menu, press Up, Down, Down, Left, Right and B for a Stage Select menu.
8. CD: Also at the title screen, hold A and press Up, Down four times, and Up. Controller 2 lets you alter the horizon and clouds.
9. CD: Press Down 3 times, Left, Right and A to access a Sound Test. Enter 07 for each of the three items and press Start to play a Secret Special Stage. Enter FM 46, PCM 12, and DA 25 and press Start for a strange message in Japanese. And entering FM 42, PCM 04 and DA 21 plus Start lets you view a buff humanoid Sonic!
10. CD: Beat the Time Attack mode in 37'27"57 or better to get the "D.A. GARDEN" option at the main menu., which lets you play around with the soundtrack and the planet. Beat it in 30'21"05 or better and press Left, and you'll have access to a Special Stage Select. If you can defeat the Time Attack in under 25'46"12, then the "VISUAL MODE" option is yours, where you can view the game's endings and the Pencil Test demo.

STREET FIGHTER II/SFII SPECIAL CHAMPION EDITION/SFII TURBO

SNES/Genesis/arcades (Capcom)



1. ARCADE: On many of the SFII machines (any version), put in Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, Strong, and Jab with Player 2's controls while a DEMO fight is going on. Unless the arcade operator has turned this option off, 16 four-digit numbers will appear at the top of the screen:
0001 - Probably Player 1's "experience points."
0002 - Total coins put into the left-hand slot.
0003 - Same as 0001, but for 2nd player.
0004 - Total coins put into the right-hand slot.

The following numbers show how many times each of the following characters have been used on that machine:
0005 - Ryu, 0006 - Honda, 0007 - Blanka, 0008 - Guile, 0009 - Ken, 0010 - Chun Li, 0011 - Zangief, 0012 - Dhalsim, 0013 - M.Bison, 0014 - Sagat, 0015 - Balrog, 0016 - Vega.
2. SNES Classic: When you see the Capcom logo appear on-screen, quickly enter Down, Button R, Up, Button L, Button Y, then Button B. If the code works, you'll hear a chime. Now you can play the same character against the same character.
3. SNES Classic: To play in Champion Mode on the original SFII, enter that same code at the Capcom logo. It turns blue to let you know you've done it right.
4. SNES Classic: GG code 1C65-DF00 allows turbo speed on the original SFII.
5. SNES Turbo: At the Capcom logo, enter Down, R, Up, L, Y and B on controller one. Then set the difficulty to one star, whip the game and get one of the cool advanced endings for almost no work!
6. SNES Turbo: On controller two, enter that same code at the black screen just before "TURBO" scrolls across. This increases your turbo speed even faster, up to 10 stars.
7. SNES Turbo: Instantly do charge moves with the GG code D071-E460
8. Genesis: Press Down, Z, Up, X, A, Y, B and C (Down, C, Up, A, A, B, B, C for three-button folks) on controller one after the buildings fade at the opening. This allows up to five stars of speed.
9. Genesis: Enter the above code on controller two at the Battle Mode Select screen.to play same player vs. player in the VS. Battle.
10. All versions: Who's the best? Ryu might be the most popular, Zangief the largest and Chun Li the cutest, but overall, Guile has the most muscle and best chance of winning.

REBEL ASSAULT

IBM PC & compatibles (LucasArts)

1 The passcodes for Mission 1 are (easy, normal, hard) FALCON, BIGGS, ACKBAR.
2. Mission 2: ANOAT, KAIBURR, FORNAX.
3. Mission 3: YUZZEM, MYNOCK, BESPIN.
4. Mission 4: BRIGIA, DAGOBAH, KESSEL.
5. Mission 5: GREEDO, MIMBAN, ORGANA.
6. If you're having trouble with garbled sound, try setting your soundcard to use the same DMA channel for both 8-bit and 16-bit sound.
7. Cheat mode: at the spinning LucasArts man, press up and fire, down and fire, left and fire, right and fire. You should hear the game clank and then say "LucasArts!" Now you can use the "ESC" key to skip levels.
8. In cheat mode, the "+" key recharges your shields.
9. Use 1-0 and A-E to go directly to any level in cheat mode.
10. LucasArts has a patch available on most on-line services that's supposed to fix the mushy joystick problem.

SUZUKA 8 HOURS/ SUZUKA 8 HOURS 2

SNES/arcades (Namco-America Inc.)

1. To get off the starting line faster, don't max the throttle. 75-80% is best. Perfect starts will pop a wheelie on the Green Hill and Bay Side circuits.
2. The courses in order of difficulty (from easy to hard) are: Green Hill, Bay Side, Suzuka's, Devil's Canyon.
3. Bikes behind the leader enjoy a boost in speed and handling. The further behind you are, the faster and easier you can handle the corners.
4. Skid marks indicate best acceleration. Lift the bike out of the corners to burn rubber.
5. Brake into hard turns, but don't release the throttle in the hairpins and chicanes.
6. Use the Warning Tracks (red & white or green & white) for extra road in the corners. Beware: they may end abruptly and slow you down on the dirt.
7. Brake as you pass the blue turn sign in order to get through the chicane on the Suzuka Circuit. Negotiate the turns—don't oversteer!—and accelerate into the final stretch.
8. Turning the bike slows you down. Try to steer as straight as possible.
9. Get a rhythm when you go through the S-turns. Remember, the straightest line is also the fastest.
10. Anticipate corners by using the map. Plan ahead.

SUPER METROID

SNES (Nintendo)

1. When in doubt, blast it in the mouth! Many boss characters are susceptible to missile tonsillectomies.
2. If you use up all your missiles, use your Charge Beam to finish off bosses. The Charge Beam blast has the same effect as regular missiles.
3. Look for an energy tank in the ceiling of a cavern in Brinstar. You'll need the High Jump or Ice Beam to get it.
4. Use a turbo controller! There are many places where you have to go straight up without ledges. If you use Turbo on your Bomb Button, you can blast yourself as high as you can go. Use this method to reach a hidden tunnel in the high cliff-face to the left of Samus Aran's ship.
5. Defeat Draygon in Maridia using your Grappling Beam. First, blow out the four power units on the walls. Then, let Draygon grab you and fly around the room. When you're in line with a power unit, fire your Grappling Beam into it and fry the boss.
6. How do you see an invisible hole? In Norfair, use your X-Ray Scope to view all the walls, but also try walking straight through rock. At the top of the shaft where iron balls roll down at you, walk left though solid stone into a hidden area.
7. If you have at least 10 Missiles, Super Missiles and 11 Power Bombs, you can refill your energy with this trick: Select the Power Bomb icon, roll up into the Morph Ball, press and hold the L and R Buttons and the Shot Button while holding Down on the control pad. Samus will absorb the energy and get refilled tanks.
8. Higher isn't necessarily better. In certain areas, turn off the Hi-Jump Boots in order to leap a little further horizontally or to avoid enemies clinging to the ceiling.
9. Use the Ice Beam to freeze Zebesian creatures. If you don't blast them to frost, they'll stay frozen long enough for Samus to use them as platforms.
10. Use your Space Jump and Space Spin to go spinning over the lava lake at Norfair and escape the area.

MORTAL KOMBAT

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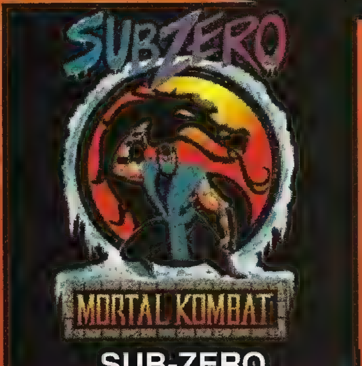
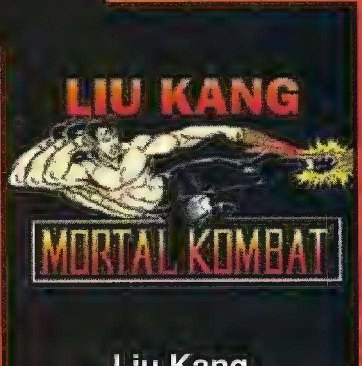


SUB-ZERO



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reviews Games

VIRTUA RACING

GENESIS SEGA

Sega's *Virtua Racing* deluxe coin-op is the be-all, end-all of driving games—second to none when it comes to death-defying speed, sensational realism and white-knuckle intensity. Crouching down in that miniature Formula One car, gripping the steering wheel as though your life depended on it and puttin' the pedal to the metal can turn a pencil-neck geek into Bobby Rahal in the time it takes to plunk in a few quarters. *Virtua Racing*'s cheap thrills and awesome spills leave all other driving sims in the dust, no question.

Wouldn't it be great to have such hand-cramping, vision-blurring, bed-wetting action right in your house? Sega thought so, and have done their best to bring *Virtua Racing* to the home front with their new Genesis cart. This 16-megger (which features Sega's highly-touted super-duper SVP chip, whatever that is) is a pretty faithful translation of the coin-op, but something unfortunate happens when you play *Virtua Racing* from your living-room couch, holding a joystick and watching the action on a standard television. Unfortunately, the racing effect that made the arcade game such a powerful experience is lost.

The main problem with the Genesis version of *Virtua Racing* is that it just doesn't look *right*. Granted, the use of polygon graphics enables the game to be faster and smoother—but when your car has clunky, rectangular wheels and the roadside mountains are giant, squared-off blocks, the game doesn't exactly scream realism. And, because of the Genesis' graphic limitations, even the polygons don't achieve the high-speed, 3D effect of the coin-op—they only make the action more difficult to follow. The game just doesn't *feel* fast, nor do you get that sense of defying gravity along the high outside walls you experience in the arcade—which sort of defeats the purpose of owning a *Virtua Racing* cart.

Like the arcade, when a *Virtua* race is over, the game is over. A few races and you've seen and done it all, pretty much eliminating that element of future-level surprise possible with other rubber-burnin' games like *Road Rash* and *Rock N' Roll Racing* (SNES). You probably won't be spending extended amounts of time with this one (rent it for a weekend and you'll be happy).

Of course, this isn't to say that *Virtua Racing* doesn't have flashes of brilliance. Being able to change your perspective all the way from first-person, behind-the-wheel to high-above, bird's-eye view (with a sweeping, continuous camera motion) is one unique trait that keeps the gameplay from getting stale and puts *Virtua Racing* in a class all its own. And the instant replay option lets you review the race via cameras positioned in various locations around the track—a cool addition not found in the coin-op. As for the features present in the arcade version, most are intact, including course selection (Big Forest, Bay Ridge or Acropolis), choice of manual or automatic shift, pit stops, car-flipping crashes and dizzying spin-outs. True to the arcade, yes—riveting, no.

The choice is yours: you can buy *Virtua Racing* for the insane price of $100 and be able to play whenever you want, or you can cruise the coin-op about 133 times. Hmmm...what time does the arcade close?

RATING: 7.9

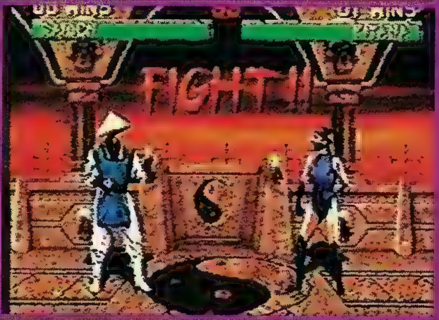
—JEFF KITTS

MORTAL KOMBAT CD

SEGA CD ARENA

There is but one burning question when it comes to *Mortal Kombat CD*: Should you sell your *Mortal Kombat* SNES or Genesis cartridge to buy the new Sega CD version? The answer: It depends on how disappointed you were with the 16-bit carts.

Senator Lieberman will be pleased to hear that the blood is back to arcade proportions on the Sega CD, with no special code necessary (hence the MA-17 rating); even the corpses have returned, gleefully stuck to the crimson-colored spikes in the Pit stage. The original arcade music and voices have also been restored, but inexcusably do not sound digitally crystal on CD. Many graphic changes have taken place, most notably the inclusion of more frames of character animation (for smoother fighter movements) and enhanced, detailed backgrounds. The debug "D.U.L.L.A.R.D." code, originally discovered for the Genesis version (that's Down, Up, Left, Left, A, Right, Down at the Start/Options screen), is also in the CD version, giving you various programmer options to screw around with, including one called "Turbo," which sends the speed of the gameplay into uncontrollable hyper drive.



If only the Sega CD player spun as quickly. The main problem with *Mortal Kombat CD* is the access time. Before each fight, gamers are treated to a silent, black screen with an annoying "Loading..." message, sometimes for up to seven long seconds—hell, you could rip out a spine in that amount of time! Shang Tsung's morphs literally *stop* the gameplay as the Sega CD grabs the next image from the disc. The opening commercial montage is cool—but not *that* cool—and it features gameplay footage from the SNES version. What's most disturbing about *Mortal Kombat CD* is that there's still plenty of room on this disc for more data—why not include some behind-the-scenes, making-of footage from WMS Industries (makers of the coin-op) that Kombatants would kill to see?

But despite such problems and disappointments, the game looks and sounds better than either 16-bit cartridge version and is the closest thing to the arcade you're going to get on a home system.

RATING: 8

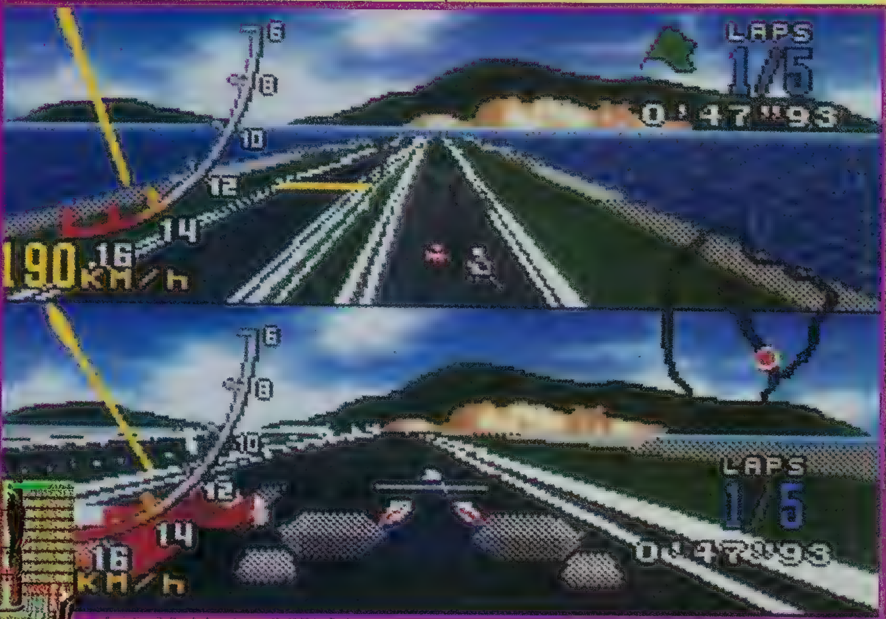
—DAN AMRICH

BUBBA & STIX

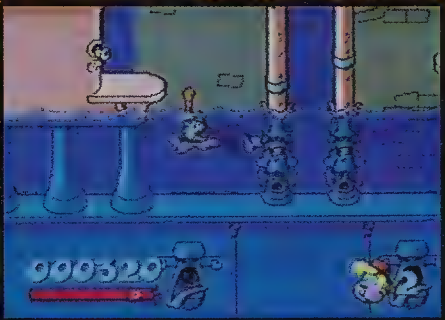
GENESIS TENGEN

With a name like *Bubba & Stix*, we were completely jazzed to write off this Genesis cart as just another wander-around-and-hit-things "adventure" and then feed it to Boss Garbage Truck, ridding the earth of its presence forever. But then we gave it a try.

It pains us to admit it, but *Bubba & Stix* is actually quite good. Silly—but not simplistic.



You are Bubba, dim-witted hick teen stranded on an alien planet. Armed only with your extraterrestrial pal Stix—an animated piece of driftwood—you must escape the planet and take out a few interstellar nasties along the way. Pick up the easy three-button controls and go to it.



But it's not the gameplay that sets *Bubba & Stix* apart—although there are plenty of obstacles you must overcome by using Stix in a various creative ways—it's the game's humor. All the graphics are bright, cartoonish and...well, cute. But not in a stupid Barney way. Humorous touches abound, from the sneaky, tip-toeing trees to Bubba's collapse upon defeat. Funny and funky, *Bubba & Stix* has all the makings of a cult hit. RATING: 7

—DAN AMRICH

COMBAT CARS

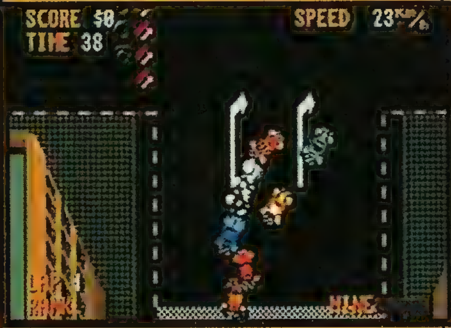
GENESIS ACCOLADE

With the recent abundance of violent racing games that combine a 5-speed with a 12-gauge—*Rock N' Roll Racing, Crash & Burn* and *RoadBlasters*, to name a few—it's no wonder that the genre was bound to have inferior copycat titles.

Behold, *Combat Cars*, Accolade's truly horrendous Genesis entry into the Firepower 500.

For starters, the graphics are barely worthy of an 8-bit system, let alone a 16-bit. The distant, overhead view of the racetrack (we're talkin' Goodyear blimp height) combined with the lack of a visible track layout doesn't allow you to see the track ahead or give any indication of how sharp the turns are, putting you at an automatic disadvantage. Maybe that's why the controls are so damn sensitive—by the time you see a hint of a curve, you'll have to steer immediately or find yourself skidding wildly into the wall. It sounds like fun, but it's not.

The game's other aspects are equally dismal, if not worse. Sub-par sound, lifeless characters, standard weaponry, limited options, and impossibly twisty tracks are only intensified by the 2-player split-screen game, which squishes the screen and makes racing even more impossible than it is in 1-player mode. Of all the good racing games on the market, *Combat Cars* isn't one of them. A shame, considering Accolade's fantastic effort with *Hardball '94*.



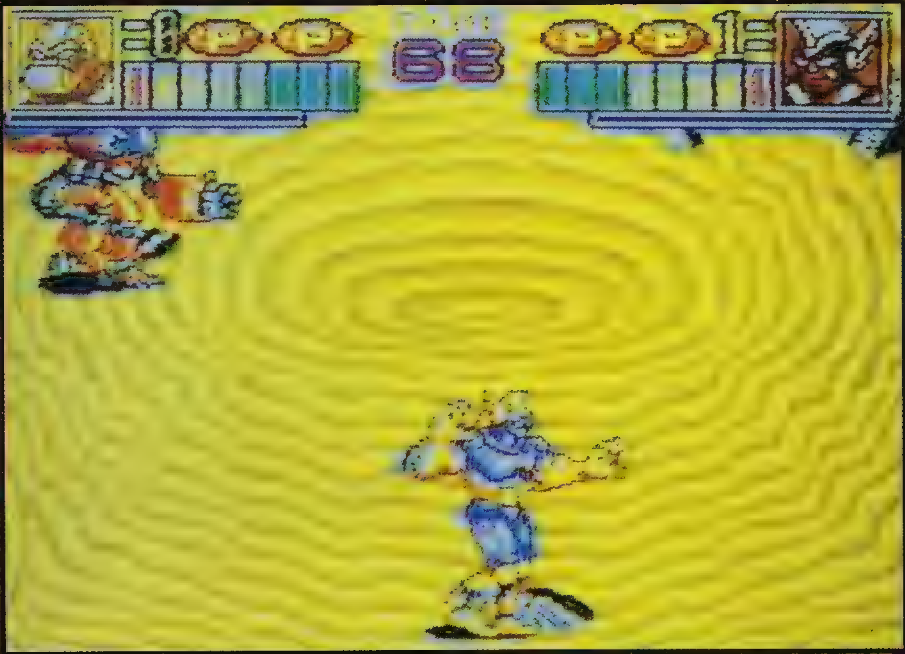
RATING: 2

—BRIAN CARNEGIE

KING OF THE MONSTERS 2

SNES TAKARA

Like the low-budget Japanese films that inspired it, the original *King Of The Monsters* became something of an underground cult hit on the insanely-expensive Neo Geo system. Its campy wrestling match between movie monsters (using entire cities as the ring) was a fresh take on fighting games, and the bizarre but exciting game-



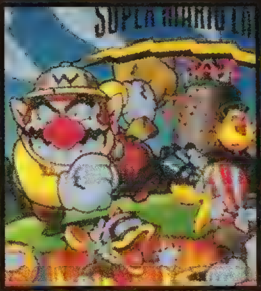
BITS & BYTES

GAMING NEWS & NOTES

•It's official—WMS Industries, creator of *Mortal Kombat, Mortal Kombat II* and *NBA Jam* coin-ops, is currently working on *Mortal Kombat III* for the arcades. Watch for it by the end of '94 or early '95.

•Sega's new Genesis upgrade, called the Super 32X (code-named Mars) will be out this fall. The $149 attachment will greatly enhance the graphic capabilities and overall speed of the Genesis, but will fall short of the awesome power of Sega's upcoming $400 super-system, the 32-bit Saturn. The first game to be released for the Mars will be a *Star Wars* cart, currently being developed in Japan. The second title, due for release in September, will be Sega Sports' *Mario Lemieux '94 Hockey*—but don't worry, it won't be anything like the pitiful Genesis original. Sega Sports filmed much of the footage for the game during hockey season at Toronto's Maple Leaf Gardens, home of the NHL's Maple Leafs. The arcade smash *Virtua Fighter* will follow, with *Batman Forever* coming from Acclaim in 1995.

•It seems that Nintendo is finally coming out of its denial stage. The company plans to use the rest of the year to try to recapture the top spot from Sega. Programmers at the big "N" are working on a new 16-bit *Mario Bros.* title that will feature Wario as the main character. It's due out this Christmas.



• Sega Channel Update: Sega plans to wait from nine months to a year before making new releases available via the Sega Channel, in order to give retailers a chance to sell off their stock. However, subscribers to the Sega Channel will be able to play one-level previews of new games.

•Batman, Superman, Flash, Aquaman, Wonder Woman, Green Arrow and six other members of the Justice League will be teaming up for a game to be produced by Sunsoft and released in January 1995. The 16-meg cart, titled *Justice League Of America*, will allow gamers to pit each of the 12 superheroes against each other in combat situations.

•*Urban Strike*, the sequel to Electronic Arts' *Jungle Strike* and *Desert Strike*, is currently in development and will be out in October for Genesis. The new 16-meg, 9-stage military shoot-'em-up adventure will put you in the cockpits of two of the UN's latest high-firepower helicopters as you defend New York, San Francisco and Las Vegas against a plot to overthrow the US government in the year 2006.

play warranted a few replays. But this new mutation, *King Of The Monsters 2*, while mildly amusing, fails to capture the player's imagination like the original did.

The basic building-throwing, village-stomping, one-on-one grapplefest is here, but with only three fighters—Astro Guy, Cyber Woo and Super Geon—and no power lines to throw your opponents into. Instead of enhancing the original aspects, they've been cut back in favor of a 2-player *Double Dragon*-style option, which offers seven levels of seen-it-already action. Most gamers can finish the game and see the extremely lame ending the day they purchase the cart.

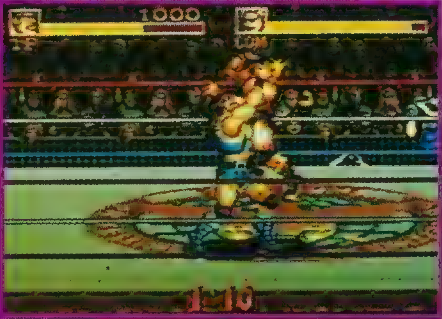
Still, the two player competitive game is silly fun, if only for a day or two. And again, just like the creature features it's patterned after, *King Of The Monsters 2* is somewhat pointless, no great contribution to the medium, and kinda crummy—but likable nonetheless. Besides, the sequel's never as good as the original. RATING: 6

—DAN AMRICH

SATURDAY NIGHT SLAM MASTERS

SNES CAPCOM

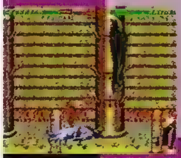
As gamers gear up for the home version of *Super Street Fighter 2* , Capcom attempts to tide them over with *Saturday Night Slam Masters*, a wrestling game that, for all practical purposes, should have been titled *Street Fighter II & 1/2*. Luckily, this game has more going for it than just a famous association; it's a solid grapplefest in its own right.



Capcom used 24 megs to bring *Saturday Night Slam Masters* to the 16-bit platforms, and those megs have been used wisely. Pretty much everything from the arcade has stayed intact in the home translation—eight controllable characters each with special moves and pins, a four-player Battle Royal option that supports controller multi-taps, fast action, stereo sound, and large, detailed sprites. Unfortunately, the giant black bar at the top of the screen—seemingly designed to give the game that real arcade "feel"—is a serious distraction.

On the other hand, fresh ideas don't exactly flow through *Slam Masters*. References to *SFII* crop up all over the place: King Rasta Mon performs Blanka's head-bite as a special move, Gunloc is "rumored to be related to a famous street fighter" (since he's got a Sonic Fist attack, bet on Guile) and Biff is pals with Zangief. Plus, the combos, dizzies, announcer and global tournament setup feel awfully familiar. But for some players, those similarities might make *Saturday Night Slam Masters* a worthy beat-'em-up before the home arrival of *Super Street Fighter 2*. RATING: 8

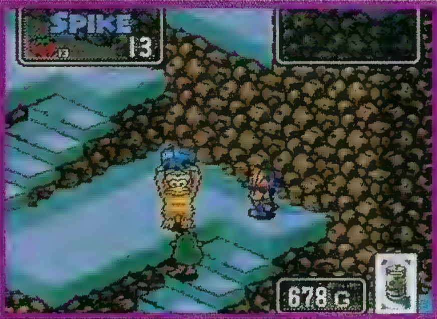
—BRIAN CARNEGIE



THE TWISTED TALES OF SPIKE McFANG

SNES BULLET-PROOF SOFTWARE

Those who wonder why the Sega Genesis continues to blow the doors off the Super Nintendo need look no further than *The Twisted Tales Of Spike McFang*. We're talking cutesy adventure in Fairyland here, as sweet Princess Camelia looks to our hero, Spike McFang, for help in defeating the evil General Von Hesler. Okay, so it's not exactly the concept of the decade, but *Spike McFang* is still a decent game for youngsters or those who simply don't enjoy a good 16-bit killfest.



Spike McFang's perspective is all three-quarter overhead views, and the graphics are very cartoonish. The game play is extremely simplistic—see Spike and his big blue hat and really red cape walk around as the background scrolls. See and read a few word balloons. You get the idea.

Occasionally, though, you do get the chance to actually *do* something, like practice your Spin Attack (does Sonic know about this?), toss your hat like a boomerang and jump over obstacles. Most of the time, however, is spent meandering through strange towns filled with helpful folk who will sell you various items and sometimes give you free info. And, of course, there are the obligatory fully animated fighting sequences with all sorts of horrific creatures.

Basically, *Spike McFang* is one of those "non-violent SNES *Legend Of Zelda* role-playing" things, with a definite Japanese bent to the graphics that's kinda cool to watch, if not to listen to (the background tunes are pure muzak hell). You need to be very young to really enjoy this game.

RATING: 7

—MARSHAL M. ROSENTHAL

SUPER PINBALL: BEHIND THE MASK

SNES AMERICAN TECHNOS

Shocking but true: since the system's introduction in 1989, the Super Nintendo has been without a pinball game. This might not be a void you're particularly worried about filling, given the rather lame track record of video pinball games. But American Technos fills it with style and common sense with their latest release, *Super Pinball: Behind The Mask*.

Even if *Super Pinball* wasn't the only pinball game available for the SNES, it would still lead the pack. This game really does capture the feeling of real pinball by giving you the same view of the playfield you'd have if you were standing in front of an actual pinball machine. Choose from three different tables, each complete with practically everything found in modern pinball machines—sound effects, skill shots, multiball, even the danger of tilting. The only element missing is the smack of the ball against the glass on particularly violent shots. If you have three other friends, they can join you for a combination game of pinball pass-the-controller; if you're a "Nintendo, No-friend-o" loser like most us, a one-player "conquest" option lets you battle the computer.

Despite cheesy music that sounds like it was left over from *Pilotwings*, the colorful graphics, easy controls and challenge make this one of the best video pinball games—on any system—to date. RATING: 9

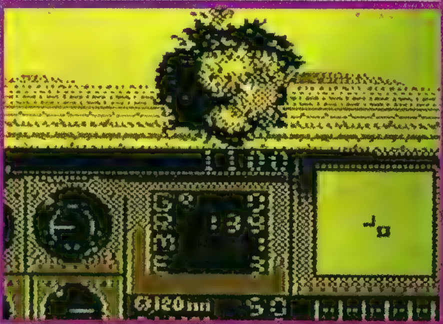
—BRIAN CARNEGIE

SUPER BATTLETANK

GAME BOY ABSOLUTE

The Gulf War could have made an excellent game, but, unfortunately, this isn't it. In *Super Battletank*—formerly a crummy SNES title that's now available for Game Boy—you prowl the desert wastes, hunt down everything that isn't you and kill it. Nail enemy tanks with antitank (duh) shells, ventilate them with machine-guns, or take them out with a "Fire-and-Forget" missile. Switch to your tactical map to locate enemy armor, helicopters, SCUD platforms, minefields and installations, then back to gunner's-eye view as you come within striking range. No fluff here, just some good old-time search-and-destroy wartime violence. You can refuel and rearm at Allied depots, but watch that fuel gauge like a hawk (running out of gas in the middle of an occupied territory is a pretty stupid way to lose a war).

The graphics are excellent, and the controls are top-notch. But while *Super Battletank* has some fine moments, certain parts of the game seem to have been thrown together at the last hour, like the depressing sameness of the engagements or the strategic map that comes up between battles but doesn't show your new objectives or mark the progress of the ground war, or change in any way, ever. Lame.



Sadly, the game is devoid of any save or password feature—which essentially means you either have to beat this sucker in one fell swoop or pause your Game Boy and watch it die a slow, miserable battery death. Still, there are worse ways to spend a train ride than chewing your way through hordes of Soviet-made war machines with a ridiculously outnumbered but vastly superior American tank. And let's not forget the patriotic tingle that you can get from sending a SCUD missile launcher to Hardware Heaven with a laser-guided missile. Oh yeah. RATING: 7

—CHRIS HUDAK

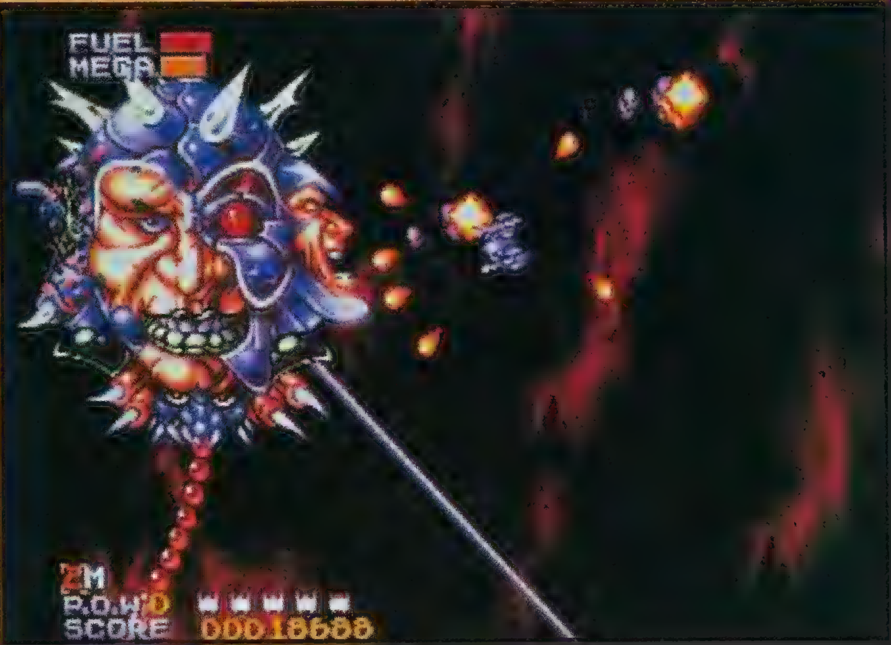
SUB-TERRANIA

GENESIS SEGA

While the comparison might not be completely fair or immediately obvious, folks who describe *Sub-Terrania* as "*Ecco The Dolphin* with a gun" aren't that far off. In both games, players float around, outwit aliens in underground caverns and get lost an awful lot. And both are pretty good examples of what the Genesis can do when some competent programmers get down and dirty.

In *Sub-Terrania*, gamers pilot a small fighter ship through nine underground-underwater levels, looking for survivors of an alien attack. It's a tense situation with a lot of gravity: thanks to Newton's law, your ship is forever being pulled downward. Make sure you find the fuel power-ups to refill your engines, or you're sunk.

While its lush, colorful graphics and impressive sound make *Sub-Terrania* a feast for the senses, learning to control the ship's thrusters is half the battle. The other half, then, lies in solving the logic puzzles on each level—firepower alone won't get you through this game alive. Since brain outweighs brawn on some levels, intellectuals



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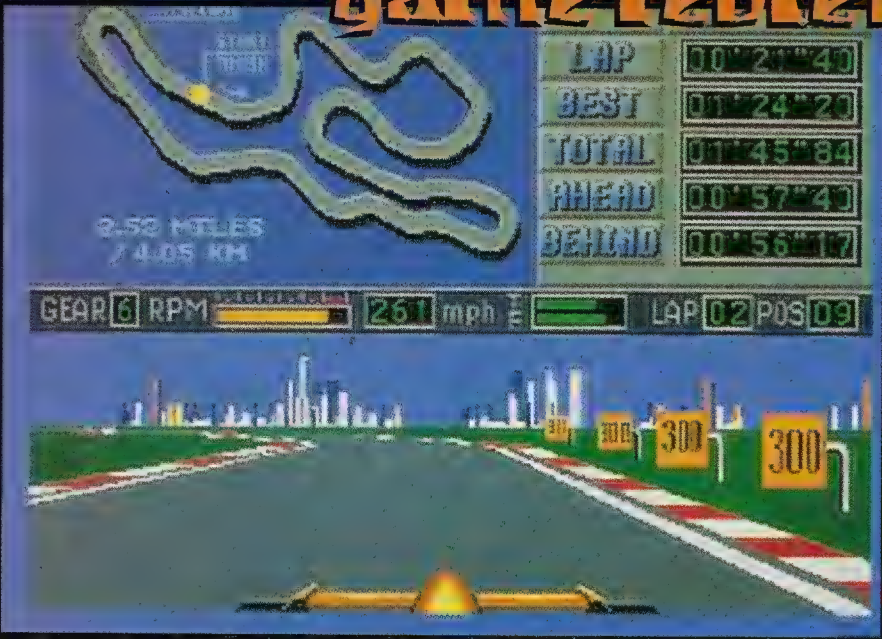


looking to blow things up should find themselves in underwater heaven here.

Sub-Terrania is a challenging, above-average shooter. The addition of strategy to the standard weaponry is a welcome twist on a stagnating genre. RATING: 8

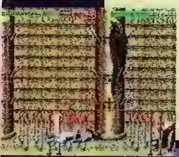
—DAN AMRICH

MARIO ANDRETTI RACING

GENESIS ELECTRONIC ARTS

I'm still looking for *New York Cab Driver*, a driving game that'd *really* bump johnny-come-slowly sims like *Pole Position*, *Outrun* and *Turbo* into the hazard lane. Imagine speeding through Manhattan traffic at Mach 5, ignoring signals, grinding pedestrians under wheel for better traction, jousting for street space with bike messengers and delivery boys, picking up fares and taking the loooong way Uptown. Now *that's* a challenge.

Meanwhile, we have stuff like Electronic Arts' *Mario Andretti Racing*. EA is justifiably known as the best creator of digital sports sims, bar none—from original classics like *One On One* to current hits like *NHL '94* and *Madden '94*. Now, stepping away from the team sport genre, EA has created a driving game that's....not bad. No, really, it's quite good. (Any resemblance between Mr. Andretti and a certain mustachioed plumber is strictly coincidental.) *Andretti* gives you the option of driving three classes of cars—Formula, Stock and Sprint. Formula is the fastest and Stock is the easiest to handle, but all three somehow seem to ride at about the same screen-speed, despite odometer readings that vary at max from 210 mph for Formula and 130 for Sprint; even at 210, we're not talking white lightning here. (Somewhere between sticking-a-fork-into-an-outlet and static cling would be about right.) You have the option of picking a color and number for your car, manual or auto transmission, and a plethora of tracks; once you've set your options, you belly up to the line for a qualifying run (in a two-player game, the screen splits into two vertical windows, so you're qualifying simultaneously), and then are given a starting position. There's no on-your-mark-set-go, however; jam your engine into gear as soon as you appear and try to advance. The manual for this sucker is thick with strategy tips, but honestly, jumping right in is fairly easy; the only thing to be aware of, and this is the game's most distinctive feature, is that both your fuel and your tire treading burn down as you drive, especially if you're a dangerous maniac. When you're on red in either category, watch for the pit lane and slide in; the longer you sit in pit, the better off your car will be, but the more time you'll be losing to the exhaust-sniffers on your tail.



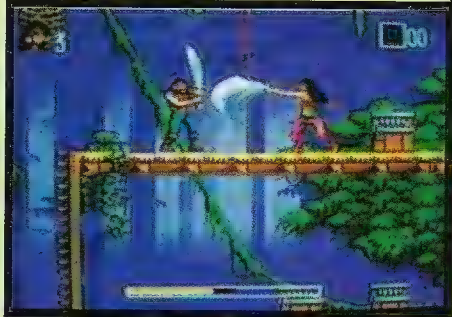
All in all, a decent game from a terrific company; toss expectations to the wind, and you'll enjoy *Mario Andretti*. RATING: 6

—JEFF YANG

PIRATES OF DARK WATER

GENESIS SUNSOFT

There's something insidious going on here. *Pirates of Dark Water* is a Saturday morning animated series that sucks raw oysters—poorly rendered, unoriginal, and—worst of all—it tries to be *educational*. It's one of those shows that parents actually don't *mind* their kids watching—which just about says it all. Meanwhile, however, the folks at Sunsoft (makers of kickass SNES scroller *Aero The Acro-Bat*) have licensed the *Pirates Of Dark Water* characters and situations for a multilevel platform action-adventure that actually rocks!



Ignore the tired plotline, which has you playing one of three heroes (Ren, the prince—where's Stimpy?, Ioz, the bald guy, or Tula, the chick) in an epic quest for the so-called Six Treasures of Rule. Most of the action is straightforward jump 'n' stab 'n' shoot, but the baddies are feisty, the swash is buckling, and the backgrounds are extremely well rendered, with nice subliminal details (if you jump into a bunch of foliage and whip your weapon around, leaves shred and flutter to the ground—things like that). One stage, at a haunted fortress known only as "The Citadel," is easily the eeriest spook-shoot this side of *Castlevania*, with animated skeletons, barfing zombies, and other creeps running interference in a landscape of lightning-shot rubble and stonework.

There's a certain amount of actual RPGing involved in *Dark Water*: You have to interact with denizens of the Dark Water world, bribing or charming your way past traps and through entries; you'll also have to use your head as much as your trigger finger, because certain items are necessary to get past certain stages—and not having, say, enough Minga melons to feed your pet monkey bird Niddler could really screw you over.

All in all, a game that rises above an incredibly cheesy merchandising premise to score as a standout in its class—it's a cart no scrolling-action fan will want to be without.

RATING: 9

—JEFF YANG

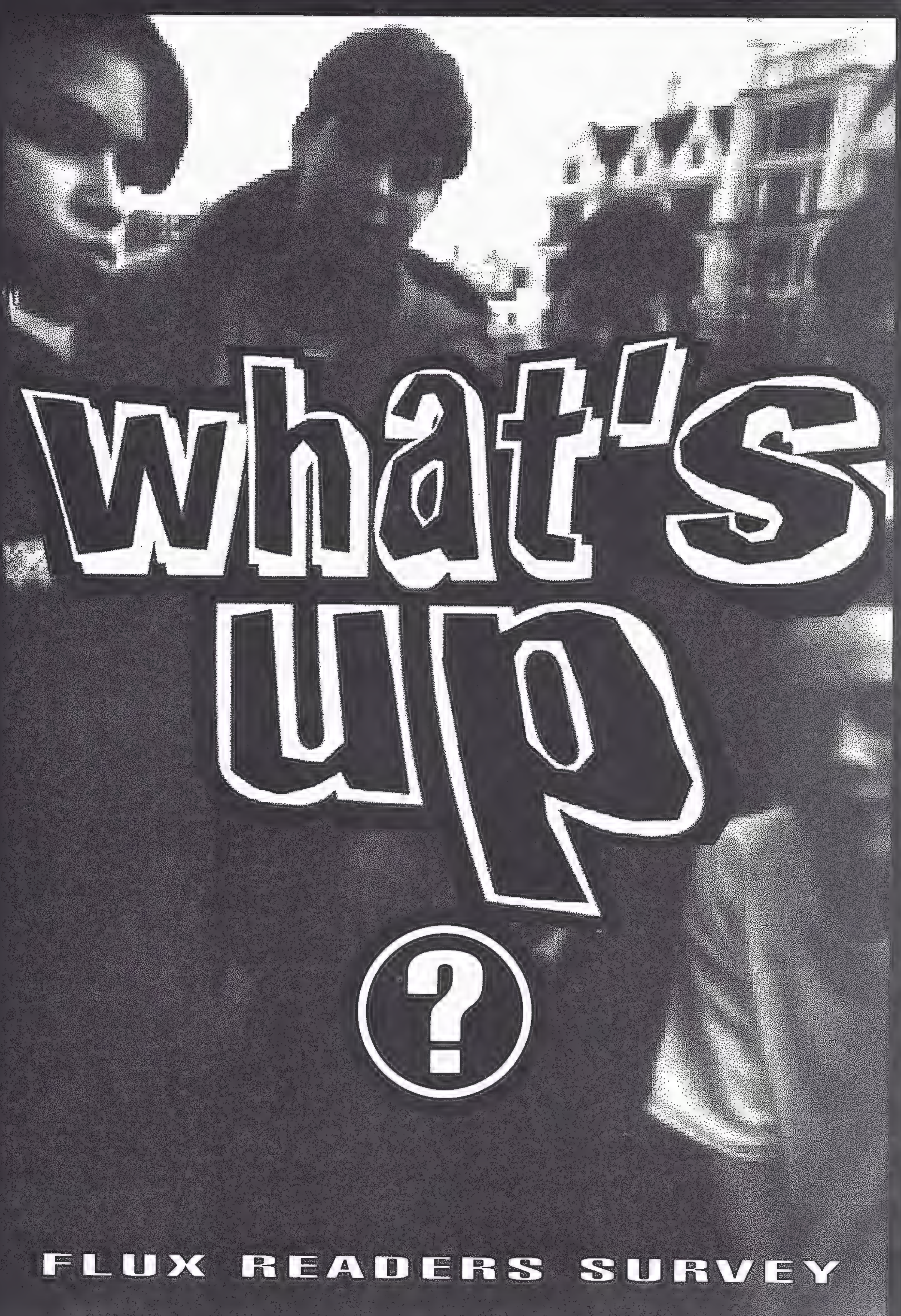
CHAMPIONS WORLD CLASS SOCCER

SNES ACCLAIM

Here in the U.S., soccer has never gotten the kind of attention that "Amurrican" sports like basketball, baseball, and football have, and virtual soccer is no exception: check the shelves of your local video boutique and you'll see a baker's dozen of each of the big three, two hockey games, and—*maybe*—something cheesy, like *Snoopy's Beagle Buddy Soccer*, or whatever.

So: As someone who still vaguely and fondly remembers the Atari 2600 soccer game (in which your medium-sized blobs try to punt a small-sized blob towards a "goal"—i.e., a large-sized blob), I plugged in this SNES *futbol* simulation with a certain amount of anticipation.

I wasn't disappointed. After the less-than-exciting opening cinema (an announc-



what's up ?

FLUX READERS SURVEY

Gatorade ☐ 2
7-Up ☐ 3
Pepsi ☐ 4
Snapple ☐ 6
Canada Dry ☐ 7
Other ______________ 8

7B. Have you bought something through mail order/catalog in the past year? 68
yes ☐ 1 no ☐ 2

8. If "yes", which of the following have you sent for: 69
trading cards ☐ 1
video games ☐ 2
computer software ☐ 3
computer hardware ☐ 4
records/tapes/CD's ☐ 5
comics ☐ 6
music videos ☐ 7
clothing ☐ 8

9. Where did you buy your copy of FLUX? 70
newsstand ☐ 1
record store ☐ 2
supermarket ☐ 3
clothing store ☐ 4
game store ☐ 5
drug store ☐ 6
comic store ☐ 7
read someone else's copy ☐ 8

10. How many people, other than you, read or have looked at your copy of FLUX magazine?
# of males__________71 # of females__________72

11. What are your favorite sports? 73
basketball ☐ 1
surfing ☐ 2
baseball ☐ 3
skiing ☐ 4
hockey ☐ 5
snow boarding ☐ 6
martial arts ☐ 7
skate boarding ☐ 8
biking ☐ 9
football ☐ 10
soccer ☐ 11
roller blading ☐ 12

12. What other magazines do you read on a regular basis (3 out of 4 issues)? 74
Rolling Stone ☐ 1
Details ☐ 2
EGM ☐ 3
Game Pro ☐ 4
Wizard ☐ 5
Hero Illustrated ☐ 6
Mouth to Mouth ☐ 7
Warp ☐ 8
Spin ☐ 9
Circus ☐ 10
Guitar World ☐ 11
Hit Parader ☐ 12
Thrasher ☐ 13
Transworld ☐ 14
Sports Illustrated ☐ 15
Other ______________ 16
____

13. How often do you go to the movies? 75
Twice a week ☐ 1
Once a week ☐ 2
Twice a month ☐ 3
Once a month ☐ 4
Never ☐ 5

ABOUT YOU

1. Are you: 76
Male ☐ 1 Female ☐ 2

2. What is your age? 77
under 16 ☐ 1
16-17 ☐ 2
18-20 ☐ 3
21-24 ☐ 4
25-29 ☐ 5
30-34 ☐ 6
35-39 ☐ 7
40-49 ☐ 8
50 and older ☐ 9

3. What is your race? 78
White ☐ 1
African-American ☐ 2
Asian ☐ 3
Hispanic/Latino ☐ 4
Other ______________________________ 5

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed? 79
Graduated 4 years of college or more ☐ 1
Attended college ☐ 2
Graduated high school ☐ 3
Some high school or less ☐ 4

5. Which of the following best describes your employment situation? 80
work full time ☐ 1
work part time ☐ 2
working student ☐ 3
non-working student ☐ 4
temporarily unemployed ☐ 5

6. What was your total family income before taxes last year? Count all types of income from all family members. 81
less than $10,000 ☐ 1
$10,000-19,999 ☐ 2
$20,000-29,999 ☐ 3
$30,000-39,999 ☐ 4
$40,000-49,999 ☐ 5
$50,000-59,999 ☐ 6
$60,000-74,999 ☐ 7
$75,000-99,999 ☐ 8
$100,000 and over ☐ 9

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er who looks suspiciously like Jimmy Connors waggles his lips as pre-game commentary scrolls in a window at the bottom of the screen) came the best soccer-in-a-box I've seen to date: bicycle kickin', head-ballin' action complete with a coin toss, shootouts, instant replays—everything except post-game riots. Gameplay is smooth and controller action intuitive, though keeping track of which man you're playing can be confusing in the melee. One feature which would've been nice: compatibility with the four-player Multitap. As it is, *World Class* provides a neat head-to-head challenge (in one-player mode, the computer tends to get away with cheap shots at your expense)—worth the purchase for both hardcore fans of the black-and-white and turf-chomping novices alike.

RATING: 7

—JEFF YANG

SPACE ACE

SNES ABSOLUTE

I never liked the arcade version of *Space Ace*. A mediocre attempt to cash in on the inexplicably successful *Dragon's Lair*, *Space Ace's* choose-your-own-adventure action discounted every gaming skill except reflexes. And after blowing all of two dollars on *Dragon's Lair* and discovering the limited fun of *pressing a button at the right time*, I wasn't about to get stiff in the nipples over a sequel.

However, *Space Ace* for the SNES is *not* the *Ace* I knew and loathed.

In fact, it's much, much worse. The original, like *Lair*, was a laserdisc-based game whose greatest strength was the clean animation of Don Bluth's wacky character designs. Absolute's cartridge-based adaptation substitutes rasterized images for the animation, which look a little ragged around the edges, like they've been subjected to electrical shock, and which move as smoothly and seamlessly as a *Pong* paddle.

Meanwhile, in seeking to duplicate the "look and feel" of the game while translating it from a reflex test into a scrolling action game, Absolute has only succeeded in making a game that is just as un-fun as the original. Suffice it to say that you, as Dexter, have been turned into a gangly adolescent nerd by the evil space villain Borf, evidently named for the regurgitating sound most purchasers of this cart will be making. Your alleged goal is to run around for a while and look for your girlfriend Kimmy (a dead ringer for Dirk the Daring's girlfriend Daphne). You begin with no weapons. You can find one along the way, but the instructions warn you that using it will make the game harder. Your immediate objective, then, is less to find Kimmy than to run away as fast as possible from stuff that's trying to kill you. The first screen is objectionably difficult until you realize that there's NOTHING for you to do except dodge Borf's laser blasts. He then flies away, and you go to the next screen to dodge other people's laser blasts. Let's see: a gangly, utterly defenseless adolescent nerd, chasing some idealized fantasy babe while dodging the blows of threatening bullies and bosses....seems to me like *Space Ace* hits a bit too close to home for Absolute's core audience. Toss this mutt and find a better scroller to play—say, for instance, *Pirates of Dark Water*.

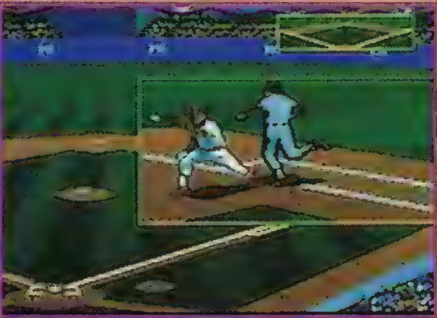
RATING: 3

—JEFF YANG

HARDBALL '94

GENESIS ACCOLADE

Last year, Accolade revolutionized the 16-bit baseball market with *Hardball III* (Genesis), a stunningly realistic simulation of America's favorite pastime. The cart featured crisp graphics, fluid gameplay and the best damn play-by-play commentary ever in a 16-bit sports game (courtesy of veteran broadcaster Al Michaels). The only thing missing was an MLB (or MLBPA) license—but that was a minor gripe.



There's not much more Accolade could have done with this year's installment, *Hardball '94*, except maybe add a cool license or spiff up the graphics a bit. So they've done just that. Unfortunately, the cost of the MLBPA license caused them to nix the Al Michaels commentary! Now, I ask you, would you rather see real players' names in your roster (not teams, though) or hear a live-sounding voice from one of the game's best announcers? Real names can be found in just about every other baseball sim, but good play-by-play is hard to find. Accolade had it last time, but they've tossed it. Shame.

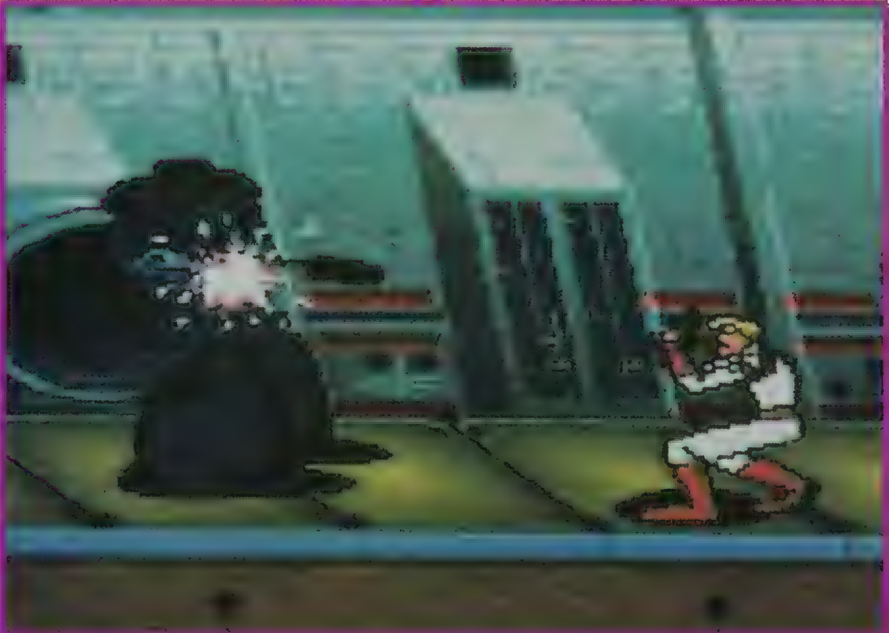
Bitching aside, *Hardball '94* is still one of the best Genesis baseball games around, even with tough new competition like Sega's *World Series Baseball* and Sony Imagesoft's *ESPN Baseball Tonight*. *Hardball '94* features 700 real-player stats, plus the new division re-alignment and '94 playoff format. The graphics have been tweaked a bit, and the player's movements are far smoother and more life-like than before. Another feature unique to the *Hardball* series is the option to view the game from either behind the batter, off the mound to the side of the pitcher (actual television perspective), or both. Switching viewpoints is a wonderful way to keep the gameplay fresh (compared to *ESPN Baseball*, which offers the same camera angle for the whole game). Other features that make *Hardball '94* a winner is the batting practice/home run derby option and the inclusion of all 28 Major League ballparks.

On the downside, the sounds and music are pretty lifeless (the home run tune is the most pathetic thing I've ever heard) and the on-screen announcements like "double!" and "triple!" look awfully cheesy. Aside from that, *Hardball '94* offers just about everything one could ask for in a baseball simulation. If you already own *Hardball III*, then '94 might not be worth it. But if you're still looking for that all-in-one Genesis baseball game, *Hardball '94* is a safe bet.

RATING: 8.5

—JEFF KITTS

REVIEW ILLUSTRAIONS BY KEVIN HENSEN



reviews
Records

STONE TEMPLE PILOTS
PURPLE Atlantic

While critics were busy dismissing Stone Temple Pilots as mere Pearl Jam copycats (even as their debut album, *Core*, sold over three million units), they seemed to overlook one small but important thing: these guys write good songs. While you could argue that "Plush" and "Creep" were derivative of Pearl Jam and Nirvana, respectively, the fact is that they both were aggressively infectious singles. So it's no surprise that Stone Temple Pilots' second album, *Purple*, finds them delivering more solid material and further defining their sound.

The band has moved away from the large production of *Core*, and with the help of producer Brendan O'Brien, they realize a tight, stripped-down, earthy sound and live vibe. Songs like "Interstate Love Song" and "Kitchenware And Candy Bars" feel more introspective and intimate than the band's previous material. Frontman Weiland sings in a higher register than before, moving away from the lower tones that inspired many Eddie Vedder comparisons.

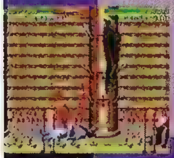
The upshot of these changes is that *Purple* is a more personal album than its predecessor; it almost makes you feel like you're sitting in on private sessions. There are drawbacks to that sort of coziness, as in "Vaseline" and "Army Ants"; both feel somewhat hurried and incomplete. (The album itself was recorded and mixed in under four weeks). But "Lounge Fly," with its strange effects, touches of psychedelia and Eric Kretz's relentless tribal drumming, is one of the album's best and most insistent rockers. "Meatplow" and "Silvergun Superman" take the same route, yet add even more heaviness to their subtle hooks. Most startling is "Pretty Penny," which starts out like a mellower "Four Sticks" (Led Zeppelin) and ends like something from the later-era Beatles. Like Soundgarden's "Black Hole Sun" (*Superunknown*), "Pretty Penny" is a complete and successful departure for the Pilots.

Much of *Purple* seems to be about searching, whether for perspective or love or identity. One thing this wry, dynamic second album should immediately find is respect.

RATING: 8.5
—DON KAYE

ALICE COOPER
THE LAST TEMPTATION Epic

It would be so nice to report that Alice Cooper has recorded a kick-ass album of high-energy rockers that recalls the glory days of his early Seventies prime. It would be a thrill to say that the songs on *The Last Temptation* are as strong as "School's Out," "No More Mr. Nice Guy" and "Eighteen," classic rock anthems Cooper still performs in his highly theatrical stage show, in between boa constrictor and guillotine bits.



It would be nice, but dishonest.

The ten songs on *The Last Temptation* are lackluster, half-hearted efforts that even Wayne and Garth would have a tough time headbanging to. There isn't an ounce of punch on the whole record. Ostensibly, this is a concept album which will accompany Marvel's new series of Alice Cooper comic books—but what that concept is, is anyone's guess.

Chris Cornell of Soundgarden wrote "Unholy War" and co-wrote "Stolen Prayer" with Alice, but not even Cornell can lift Cooper or his band out of the muck. For Cooper diehards *only*.

RATING: 3
—GARY CEE

CATHEDRAL
COSMIC FUNERAL Columbia/Earache

This new four-song EP from England's modern-day Sabbath revisionists is comprised of something old, something recent and two new tunes. "Fountain Of Innocence" from *The Ethereal Mirror*, Cathedral's last album, showcases a more melodic, psychedelic side of the band, with an extended jam at the end that could've come right off any early Sabbath album. "A Funeral Request—Rebirth," a new version of a song from the band's debut, *Forest Of Equilibrium*, is certainly more raw in its overall arrangement, but lacks the catchiness and melody of their later material.

"Hypnos 164" and the title track are the two new entries. The former is a furious exercise in powerful, doom-laden metal, alternating tempos between fast and slow and piling on super-heavy riffs. Only the coarse production (by singer Lee Dorrian and guitarist Gaz Jennings) harms it slightly. They do a better job on "Cosmic Funeral," which has a clearer sound, but is a spacey, slow track that strains to hold one's interest until mid-song, when it picks up speed. Both tracks once again show blatant Sabbath influences, especially in "Cosmic Funeral"'s double-tracked lead solos.

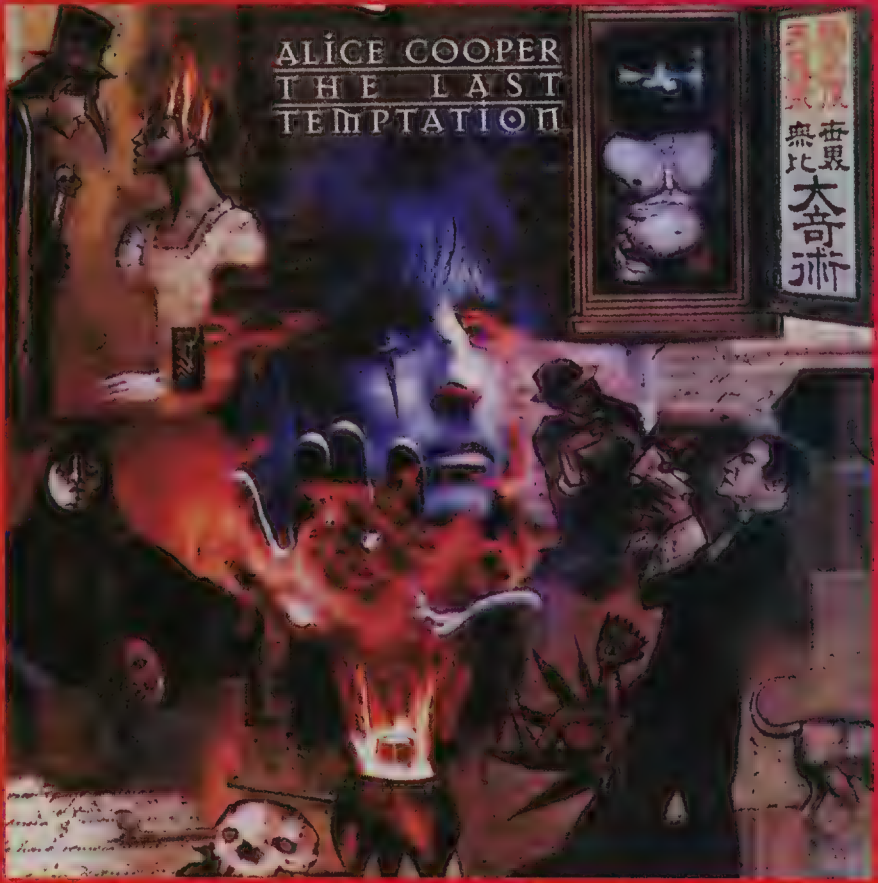
Ultimately, *Cosmic Funeral* is little more than a stopgap for Cathedral, a respite between more serious full-length efforts.

RATING: 6.5
—DON KAYE

DROWN
HOLD ON TO THE HOLLOW Elektra

Any pimple-faced college doofus can start a successful "industrial" band these days; all that's needed are a couple of bottles of Jäger, a crummy but serviceable synthesizer and drum machine, and some trivial issue to gripe about (like a pathetic grade point average or no more beer in the fridge). Sure, you're bound to turn out a few angst-ridden originals in the Skinny Puppy/Godflesh vein, but more often than not you'll just paint it black by the numbers and hope that nobody will notice.

L.A.'s Drown is a pretty crafty combination of both art and artifice—and even though Skinny Puppy band leader Dave Ogilvie is credited as producer, Drown dig a fairly shallow grave for themselves with *Hold On To The Hollow*. Initially, titanic tracks like "Transparent," "Reflection" and



"Pieces Of Man" sound no different from songs on Nine Inch Nails' recent doomfest, *The Downward Spiral*. Lots of prickly synth pears being sliced open by machete-sharp guitar riffs, with just the right layering of singer Lauren Boquette's pit-bull adrenaline. Listen closely and you'll hear Drown's secret—these guys lacquer more cheesy Seventies rock hooks into the mix than Lynyrd Skynyrd, and temper it with surreal touches of Tangerine Dream. A nice approach, but it begins to wear thin after repeated plays.

Okay, Drown's angry. But at what? "I self-destructed/I reconstructed/I owe this all to you," Boquette screams on "I Owe You," and then tones it down to a surly snarl on "Beautiful": "Ugly I feel/My body's inside you/Tongue in/Tongue out." And right about then you start shifting uncomfortably in your seat, thinking whether or not all this anger was plotted neatly on a piece of calculus-class graph paper. But until the next truly miserable artist stumbles tearfully along, Drown will have to do. RATING: 6

—TOM LANHAM

GANG STARR

HARD TO EARN Chrysalis

After embarking on some individual projects, Gang Starr's DJ Premier and Guru have put it back together for another set of sucker-slayin' beats and rhymes. *Hard To Earn* is, first and foremost, Premier's finest, most rugged hour. He pioneered the now-fashionable jazz-hip hop approach years ago, but there's more to his production style than fly horn licks. Load up track no. 4, "Brainstorm," drop to your knees and worship the ferocious drum track and head-spinning sonic trickery. Let the quirky sample collage of "The Planet" confuse and astound your senses. Nod your unworthy head to the ill guitar riffage on "Blowin' Up The Spot." Yup, Premier's the man, no question.

Once again, Guru's lyrics are dominated by endless complaints about phony rappers, which—no disrespect intended—get exhausting. Fortunately, his delivery is always mesmerizing, and he hits his targets between the eyes nearly every time, particularly on "Mass Appeal" and "Suckas Need Bodyguards." ("I hate fake MCs/They always act hard/But won't walk the streets without their bodyguard.")

Actually, *Hard To Earn*'s most memorable track, "Aiight Chill...," doesn't even have Guru on it. It's just five minutes of Premier's answering machine messages laid over an obese beat. It may be filler, but it's stellar wacky-mix-tape material. RATING: 7.5

—JOHN REYNOLDS

ADVISORY
GANG STARR
Hard to Earn

HELMET

BETTY Interscope

When Helmet first rose to popularity some two years ago, frontman Page Hamilton went to great lengths to prove that his group was absolutely, positively *not* a heavy metal band. He flaunted his short hair and GQ looks. He stressed his punk rock upbringing. He explained how he drew inspiration from jazz artists like Ornette Coleman and Miles Davis as well as avante-garde performers like Glenn Branca and Sun Ra. But for all of the dropped names and close shaves, Helmet's impenetrable wall of musical muscle had a lot more in common with Black Sabbath than it did with Black Flag or Miles Davis.

On their new album, however, Helmet breaks out of its metal mold by loosening its muscles just enough to demonstrate their musical diversity. The New York City outfit still rely strongly on jagged, repetative guitar riffs and powerhouse drumming, but their delivery is now augmented with experimentation, melody and a touch of vulnerability. Hamilton's vocals are no less rage-stricken. He's much more emotional, and provides a tuneful path for the punchy rhythms that follow. The guitar passages are more daring and dynamic than those on Helmet's last effort, *Meantime*.

Songs like "Tic" and "Rollo" layer white

CHUNX

MEDIA NEWS & NOTES

•A live-action feature film based on *X-Men* is currently in production at Twentieth Century Fox. Fox hopes that the movie will be the first in a series. The 1994 Fox slate also includes an Oliver Stone remake of *Planet Of The Apes* and *Alien 4*.

•Watch for an animated series based on *Judge Dredd*, apparently coinciding with the release of the film version starring Sylvester Stallone.

•*Hulk/X-Men/Spider-Man* creator Stan Lee will host an animated series called *Marvel Action Hour*. The weekly series will feature a half-hour *Fantastic Four* episode, plus a half-hour *Iron Man* show, which will feature War Machine and several members of Force Works as supporting characters.

•Upcoming Warner Bros. releases: *Interview With The Vampire*, starring Tom Cruise; *Richie Rich*, starring Macauley Culkin; and *The Specialist*, starring Sylvester Stallone and Sharon Stone.

•While the search for a "Robin" continues, it looks pretty solid for Jim Carrey to play the riddler in *Batman Forever*, the third installment in the blockbuster film trilogy. Apparently both Tommy Lee Jones and John Malkovich have been approached about playing Two-Face. Michael Keaton will once again play Batman.

•Starting this fall, Fox's Saturday morning line-up will include *X-Men*, *The Tick*, *Spider-Man* and *The Adventures Of Batman And Robin* (formerly titled *Batman: The Animated Series*—it will no longer run on weekdays).

•CBS' new Saturday line-up will include animated series based Jim Lee's comic book series *WildC.A.T.S.* and the upcoming Jim Carrey movie, *The Mask*.

•Three Clive Barker movies are on the way, *Hellraiser IV*, *Candyman 2: Farewell To The Flesh* and a big-budget animated film based on his children's book, *The Thief Of Always*.

•Cast members for the upcoming *Star Trek: Generations* movie include W. Shatner, P. Stewart, Malcolm McDowell, J. Doohan, W. Koenig, J. Frakes, L. Burton, M. Dorn, G. McFadden, M. Sirtis and B. Spiner. Who else will be on the bridge is still a mystery.

•Future films include: *Casper*; *The Little Rascals*; *Lawnmower Man II*; *Drop Zone*, starring Wesley Snipes; a $60-million sci-fi epic entitled *Waterworld*, starring Kevin Costner; *Godzilla*; *Mortal Kombat*; *Spider-Man*; *Fantastic Four*; *Junior*, which features Arnold Schwarzenegger as a pregnant man; and *The Brady Bunch Movie*.

•Capcom's popular Mega Man character will be the subject of a syndicated, animated television series this fall.

•Jean Claude Van Damme will play Guile in the upcoming *Street Fighter 2—The Battle For Shadowloo* film. Raul Julia, star the the *Addams Family* movies will play Bison, and Ming-Na Wen, star of the *Joy Luck Club*, will kick butt as Chun-Li. The film, which has a budget of $35 million, will be released in December '94.

noise under precision guitar, while "Beautiful Love" opens with a sensitive jazz passage before being slashed in half by extemporaneous explosions of volume. Other songs like "Milquetoast," "Wilma's Rainbow" (the band is obviously on a Flintstones kick) and "Biscuits For Smut" are more groove-oriented, but in a brutally heavy way, appealing to metalheads and alternative fans alike. Strap on your helmet, it's gonna be a rockin' ride.

RATING: 9

—JON WIEDERHORN

JACKYL

PUSH COMES TO SHOVE Geffen

Jackyl hail from the deep South, where there's not much difference between a chainsaw and a guitar. So when there are no more trees left standing, you do the next best thing: form a band and make some records.

Push Comes To Shove continues in the same simple Southern-fried spirit as the band's highly successful debut of two years ago—and if you can stomach singer Jesse DuPree's caterwauling, it really is a fun album. Jackyl wail passionately about many things—their beloved Dixieland, hell, road stories from Chinatown and the secret of the bottle (Secret? What secret?). While we all got a chuckle out of last year's "The Lumberjack Song" (and winced during the chorus of "She Loves My Cock"), this time around Jackyl save the goofiness for encores and head straight for the barn with barbecue-hot riffing and tractor-pulling basslines. They may be hillbillies, but they sure can kick up some rock 'n' roll dust.

RATING: 8

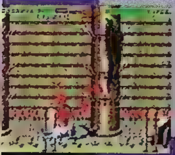
—JEFF GILBERT

VARIOUS ARTISTS

KISS MY ASS Mercury

This patchwork collection of Kiss songs, reverently arranged and recorded by a group of wonderfully diverse artists, proves what Kiss fans have known since 1974: that, underneath the greasepaint, the fire-breathing tricks, Paul Stanley's cock-of-the-walk posturing and Gene Simmons' mile-long tongue lies a sure-footed canon of sturdy-as-steel songs.

Pre-release reports that *Kiss My Ass* would feature recordings of Kiss songs by more than *forty* artists proved to be so much hype. But the 11 tracks here should go a long way towards soothing the anguish of disappointed fans. Not that there aren't some misses here; ironically enough, the least compelling performances are those by the only standard hard rock bands on the bill; Anthrax ("She") and Extreme ("Strutter") both turn in disappointingly lackluster performances.



But the rest of the artists all glitter like gold. Lenny Kravitz, with a little help from Stevie Wonder on harmonica, injects some serious solo into "Deuce." Rage Against The Machine, Tool and Faith No More do a heavy number on "Calling Dr. Love"—updating the tune with a rigid, Nineties guitar attack that cuts to the quick. Country king Garth Brooks treats "Hard Luck Woman" with the kind of love he probably reserves for his own songs. And the Mighty Mighty Bosstones squeeze every last drop of energy out of "Detroit Rock City."

The high points of this compilation of high points are also the album's most ambitious arrangements: Toad The Wet Sprocket's successful twisting of "Rock And Roll All Nite" into a lamenting waltz and a bizarre classical rendition of "Black Diamond."

RATING: 9

—GARY CEE

MACHINE HEAD

BURN MY EYES Roadrunner

This is *real* metal. As the world overflows with the vilest of derivatives, from alternative metal to rap metal to who knows what, Machine Head has burst out of San Francisco's legendary Bay Area—home of Metallica, Testament and Exodus—to carry on that region's proud legacy of brutal power metal.

Led by the corrosive vocals and acidic guitar of ex-Violence shredder Robb Flynn, Machine Head unleash a devastating volley of bruising, crushingly heavy riff-monsters on *Burn My Eyes*, their debut album. There's the mid-paced opener, "Davidian," which slowly descends into hell halfway through with an ironclad riff of fearsome power. This is followed by "Old" and "A Thousand Lies," devastating tracks fueled by killer chords. *Burn My Eyes* has much to live up to after that opening triple blast, but Machine Head successfully sustain their aggression, delivery and catchy songwriting throughout, particularly on later crunchers like "None But My Own" and "I'm Your God Now."

Colin Richardson's production is crisp and fat, bringing the full power of the band to the forefront. The result is an album that sounds like Pantera meets Alice In Chains meets Ministry. *Burn My Eyes* is not only the best debut of the year so far, it's a real contender for the most electrifying heavy metal release of 1994.

RATING: 9

—DON KAYE

SIR MIX-A-LOT

CHIEF BOOT KNOCKA American

Like Nigel Tufnel said in *This Is Spinal Tap*, "What's wrong with being sexy?"

On his fourth album, Sir Mix-A-Lot makes the distinction between "sexy" and "sexist" no less than three times, and although he's unquestionably a dog, he's a smart one with a deep understanding of the politics and humor of boy-girl relationships.

There are several songs about money here, and one track about Mix's bad self ("What's Real"), but the album's primary order of business is mixing crazy horniness and arrogance into something fun and positive. Mix is sometimes tasteless (like the titty ode, "Put 'Em On Da Glass"), always clever, but never mean-spirited. His talent for inventing different ways to express the joy of laying pipe is truly impressive.

As usual, the big man's tracks are pretty adventurous and come in assorted futuristic-funk flavors, although the album could use more of the feel-it-in-your-spleen stuff like "Monsta Mack," "Just The Pimpin' In Me" and "Sleepin' Wit My Fonk" and less of the "Whoomp! There's My Butt" party disco.

RATING: 7.5

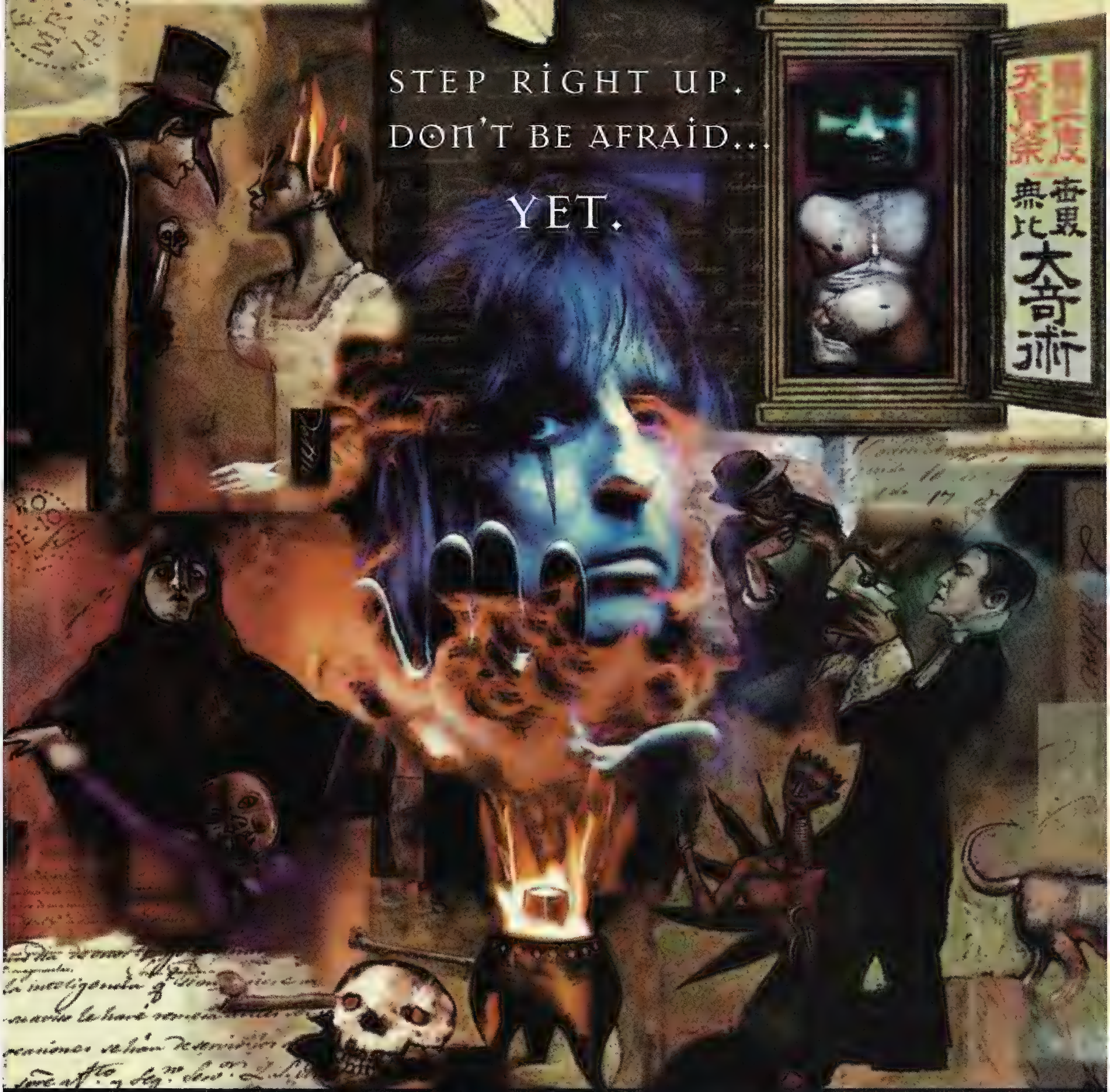
—JOHN REYNOLDS

NAS

ILLMATIC Columbia

Considering the list of veteran producers that hooked up the tracks on this solo debut from Nas—D.J. Premier, the Large Professor, Pete Rock, Q-Tip—it's no surprise that the beats are brutal, jazzy and New York to the core.

The real surprise is the scary talent of Nas himself. Violent on the vocab, this Queensbridge kid has a complex verbal flow and so many ideas and insights that his rhymes can barely contain them. He flips lyrics like flapjacks on "N.Y. State Of Mind," "Life's A Bitch" and "Halftime," and even though the outlook is positive, it ain't no party, and it ain't no disco. If dark, honest poetry about the streets of the Rotten Apple, the hustlers and survivors that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DON'T BE AFRAID...
YET.

ALICE COOPER "THE LAST TEMPTATION."

Let the man who redefined your nightmares take you on a new tour through his own dark carnival of souls. "The Last Temptation" is an inviting return to the legendary rock-and-roll storytelling of Alice Cooper. Ten new songs that paint a vivid picture of the oddities of human nature. Very cool. Very Alice.

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Produced by Don Fleming, Andy Wallace, Duane Baron, and John Purdell. Management: Alive Enterprises

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epic records group

live on them, and the medicine they take to escape intimidates you, stick with your old Kid N' Play vinyls and stay clear of *Illmatic*.

Most self-professed "hard" rappers lie for a living, but Nas proves it's a lot "harder" to tell the truth. This is for fans of the real shit only.

RATING: 9

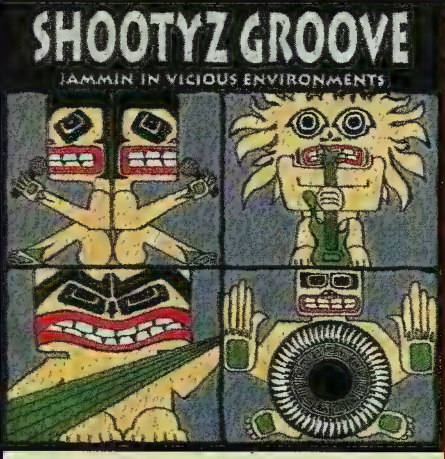
—JOHN REYNOLDS

SHOOTYZ GROOVE

JAMMIN IN VICIOUS ENVIRONMENTS

Mercury

Rap vocals and rock music can make for an explosive mix, as Aerosmith and Run-DMC, Anthrax and Public Enemy, and most recently—and most eloquently—Rage Against The Machine have demonstrated. Like Rage's self-titled debut, all the songs on Shootyz Groove's debut album feature rap-style vocals backed by a rock band. The results, however, are much less incendiary.



Shootyz's grooves range from funk to metal. Vocally, there's plenty in the way of in-your-face aggressiveness—though Shootyz Groove is nowhere near as pissed off as Rage Against The Machine. While the group is technically proficient, it fails to fully exploit the potential of its rock/rap approach. For the most part, rock pretty much plays second fiddle to rap here, with the musicians serving as a mere backup for the rapper to strut his stuff. There's little of the vicious riff-o-rama that made Rage's debut so powerful, and the raps lack the sort of inventiveness needed to get hip-hop fans jazzed. If nothing else, *Jammin In Vicious Environments* is an ambitious project.

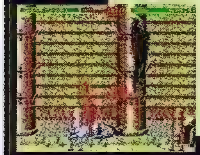
RATING: 6.5

—WILLIE MARR

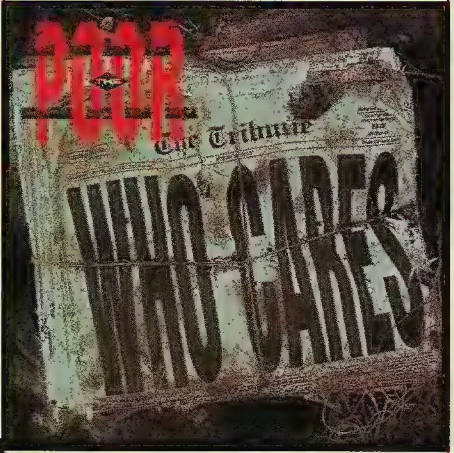
THE POOR

WHO CARES Epic

Australia's The Poor play the sort of anthemic, high-testosterone hard rock that was common in the Eighties, but has since fallen out of fashion in the age of grunge and girlie-man alternative rock. While most of today's current crop of hard rockers sing about socially-conscious, politically-correct issues, The Poor take on more standard rock 'n' roll fare on *Who Cares*, like two-timing chicks ("Liar"), the virtues of hard liquor (their minor hit "More Wine Waiter Please") and doing the town ("Downtown").



While it's somewhat refreshing to hear a band not take itself too seriously, ultimately The Poor don't hold up. Their sound is raw and driving, but their songs never rise above the most hackneyed, formulaic stuff—with tired lyrical phrases like "Put the pedal to the metal, I'm going downtown" and riffs that sound like worn-out AC/DC retreads. "Who cares" is right.



RATING: 4

—WILLIE MARR

SONIC YOUTH

EXPERIMENTAL JET SET, TRASH AND NO STAR DGC

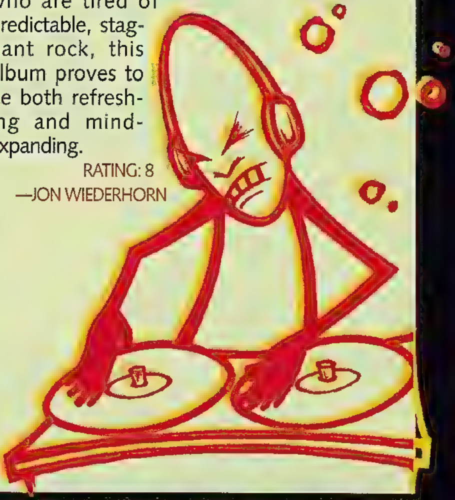
More than a decade ago, when Sonic Youth was actually kind of young, the band set out to deconstruct the traditions and cliches of rock music by breaking all the rules of the genre; awkwardly tuned guitars, droning rhythms that never really gelled and an absence of conventionally structured choruses defined the band's sloppy, experimental sound. By 1990, however, Sonic Youth was writing more cohesive material, relying on heavily distorted guitar riffs and pummeling rhythms—in other words, the band was rocking, and rocking hard.

With the release of *Experimental Jet Set, Trash And No Star*, Sonic Youth veer away from their recent stomping excursions and head back toward their art-rock roots. This record isn't as self-indulgent as early albums like *Sister* and *Evol*, but it's not the kind of disc you'll want to hear from the center of the mosh pit. Operating on a more subtle and disturbing level than most hard rock albums, *Experimental Jet Set* confuses and haunts the listener with strange guitar sounds and moaning, strung-out vocals for minutes at a time before lashing out with full-fisted torrents of noise.

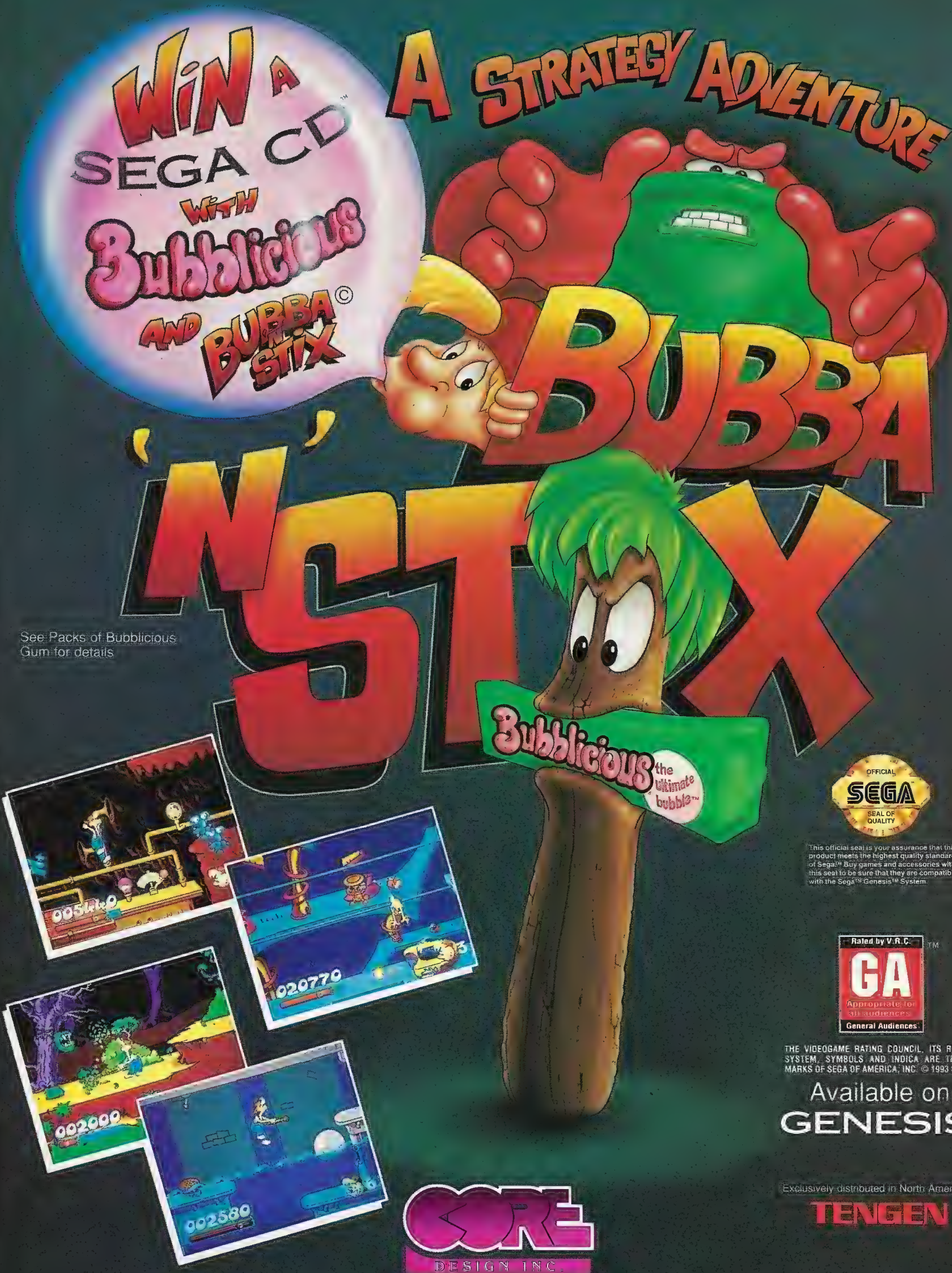
For those who like their music harsh and heavy all the time, *Experimental Jet Set* may not be your cup of napalm, but for listeners who are tired of predictable, stagnant rock, this album proves to be both refreshing and mind-expanding.

RATING: 8

—JON WIEDERHORN



SONIC
EXPERIMENTAL JET SET,
TRASH AND NO STAR
YOUTH



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AQUAMAN #1

DC Comics

Written by Peter David, pencilled by Marty Egeland and inked by Brad Vancata

It is often said that Peter David, writer for *The Incredible Hulk* and *Dreadstar*, is the best writer working on mainstream superhero comics today. This simply is not the case. While David does have moments of brilliance, his genius is largely inconsistent. Still, as he shows in the first issue of DC's latest attempt to revive *Aquaman*, the guy defintely has a talent for the superhero genre.

The job undertaken by David, Egeland and Vancata had to be a daunting one. This is, after all, *Aquaman*'s sixth number 1 issue (the third for an ongoing series). Time and again, the character has been revitalized and reintroduced, only to falter and disappear again. And yet, DC continues to reinvent the character with an inexplicable vigor.

Why?

Though *Aquaman* has never been one of the best-selling heroes in DC's stable, his history with the *Justice League* and on television in *Superfriends* have kept him a valuable member of the company's roster. It's interesting to note that while DC created many early comic book archetypes (*Superman*, *Batman*, *Justice League*), Aquaman was the company's version of a Marvel-created archetype, Namor The Sub-Mariner, whose own publishing history ironically includes *five* number one issues.

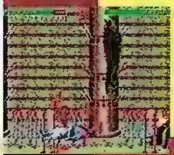
But even if this new Aquaman series doesn't fly, it won't matter. We can still expect to see new Aquaman series every few years because he is one of DC's hottest licensing properties.

Coming hot on the heels of *David's Aquaman: Time & Tide* miniseries, *Aquaman* #1 sees the Sea King's dreams haunted by a figure (no, not Freddy Krueger) which seems to know far more about him than is healthy. Aquaman, sporting a cool-looking new beard, and Aqualad (always hated that name) must locate a sunken nuclear sub and battle a major new villain, Charybdis.

While DC makes a lot of promises and implies that this new *Aquaman* deserves to be as hot as the new *Green Latern* or *Batman*, you can push aside all the hype once you read the book. David's writing is still better than the majority of folks working in comics, and Aquaman's new angry attitude is far more interesting than the moping he did in the previous series. Plus, David has always found success with mixing in new characters with the old, and that continues here.

Still, it is unlikely that *Aquaman* will ever achieve the level of popularity that would make DC happy—however, this version might just be the best shot they'll ever get. The art by Egeland and Vancata is smooth and sharp and should attract readers on its own, with or without David's reputable name.

RATING: 7.5



BLACK SABBATH #1

Malibu Rock-It Comix

Written by Terence "Geezer" Butler and David J. Rubin, Painted by Tom Kyffin

A funny, informative look back at the very early days of doom-metal pioneers Black Sabbath, given a huge amount of credibility by the writing credit of Sabbath bassist Geezer Butler. Butler's hand is obvious throughout, as the story takes some very strange, unexplained, supernatural turns—all of which, claims the Geezer, actually happened. Tom Kyffin's painting is unusually good compared to those in most rock-related comics. And, surprisingly, this is a good read, whether you give a damn about Sabbath or not. The highlight of the book is the tracing of the animosity and rivalry between guitarist Tony Iommi and former vocalist Ozzy Osbourne, from their days of bullying each other in the schoolyard to the immature backbiting of their adulthood. Particularly interesting is the constant harping on how badly the band was screwed by their former manager. The interviews with the Sabbath band members, unfortunately, reveal little that isn't already in the comic, though they do offer an update on the band's activities.

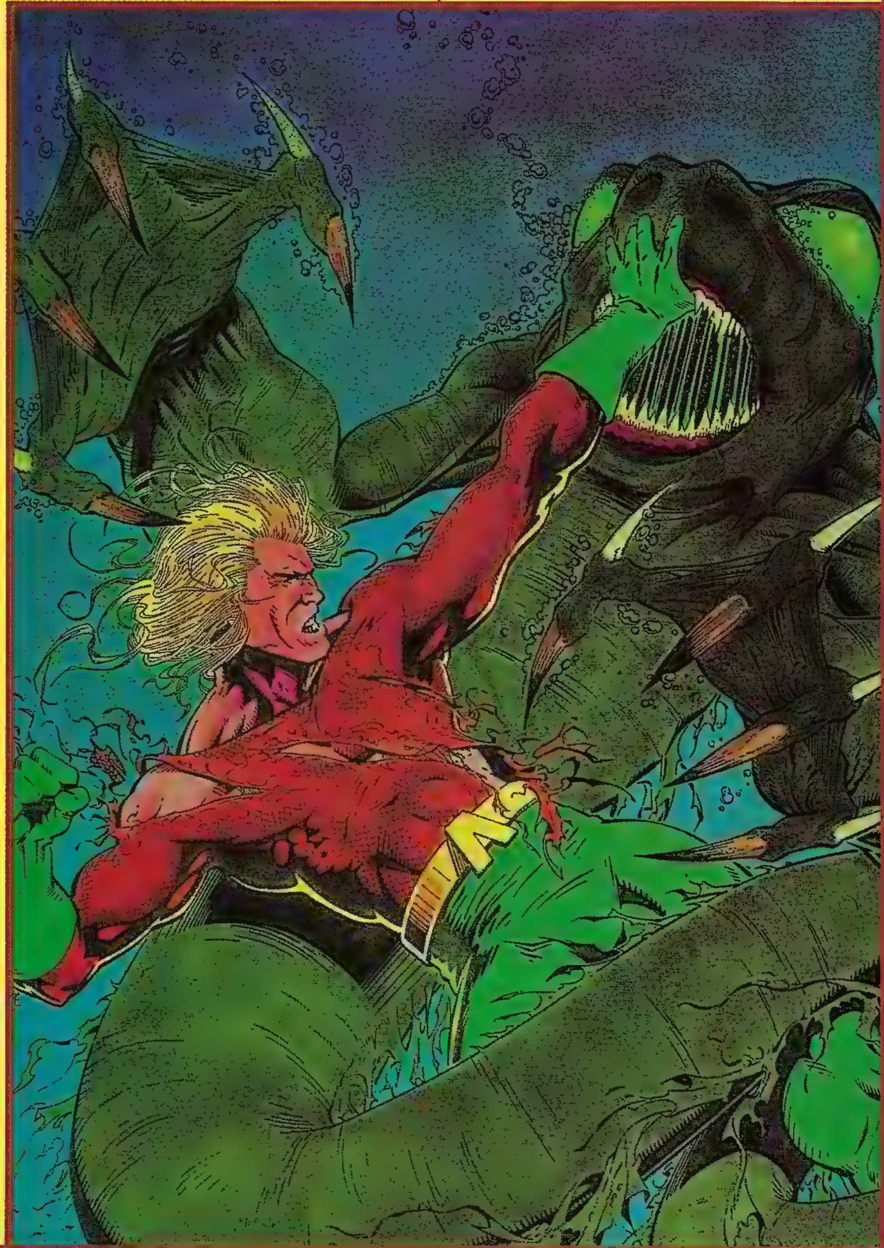
RATING: 8 (for Sabbath fans)/5 (for everyone else)

BRUCE LEE #1

Malibu Available: July

Written by Mike Baron, Pencilled by Val Mayerik

Mike Baron and artist Val Mayerik have done a fine job capturing the humor, charm and intense ass-kicking of the great Bruce Lee movie, *Enter The Dragon*, in this issue. Never again will we have any more films starring Lee, but this comic is the next best thing. Mayerik's art is well-suited to the subject matter and Baron's script is appropriately black and white. Despite some disturbing anachronisms (references to rap, use of Nineties' slang by people in Nineties' hair-



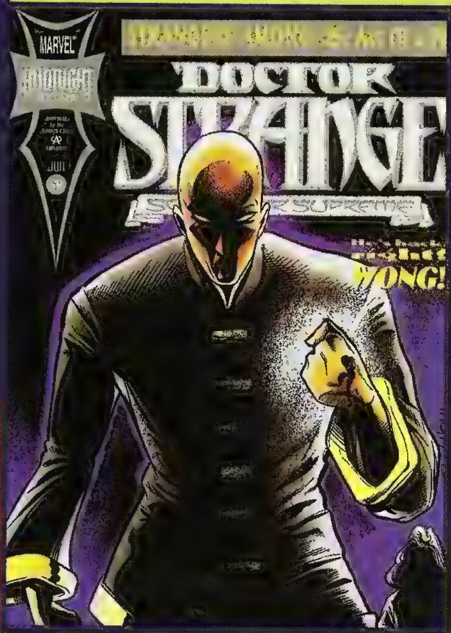
cuts, characters toting camcorders), this is a very fine effort.
RATING: 7.5

DOCTOR STRANGE series

Marvel Comics

Written by David Quinn, Pencilled by Melvin Rubi, Inked by Fred Harper

Ever since David Quinn (*Faust*) assumed writing responsibilities for *Doctor Strange*, the series has been one of Marvel's best. Quinn has done a terrific job in changing the character and the story far more significantly than we've seen in other shakeups. Strange himself is darker and more deceitful, and his two doppelgangers are even worse. Not only is the good Doctor greatly weakened, but he seems to have lost control of everything outside the new null space sanctuary he inhabits. The color by computer-colorists Heroic Age is spectacular, and Melvin Rubi's art (and that of recent fill-in artist John Hixson) is better than average. My only complaint here is regarding Quinn's inclusion of an overabundance of superheroes, clearly in response to the requirements of marketing and continuity, not creativity. If Quinn had simply limited himself to the new world he created for Doctor Strange, and not followed the dictates of a disturbing new trend, this book would have been infinitely better off.
RATING: 8



STAR WARS: DROIDS #1

Dark Horse Comics

Written by Dan Thorsland, Pencilled by Bill Hughes, Inked by Andy Mushynsky

Set in time before the *Star Wars* movie trilogy, Dark Horse's new *Droids* series would have been better titled "The Misadventures Of R2-D2 and C-3PO." While the first issue is fun and often amusing, *Droids* is only for *Star Wars* completists and kids. Previous Dark Horse *Star Wars* series like *Dark Empire* and *Tales Of The Jedi* are loaded with the ominous danger and the complexity of the *Star Wars* cosmology, but this series has none of that. And while the art is good, it would have been better suited to *Elfquest*-type fantasy than *Star Wars*-based sci-fi.
RATING: 4.5

HELLBOY #1 &#2

Dark Horse Comics

Art by Mike Mignola, script by John Byrne

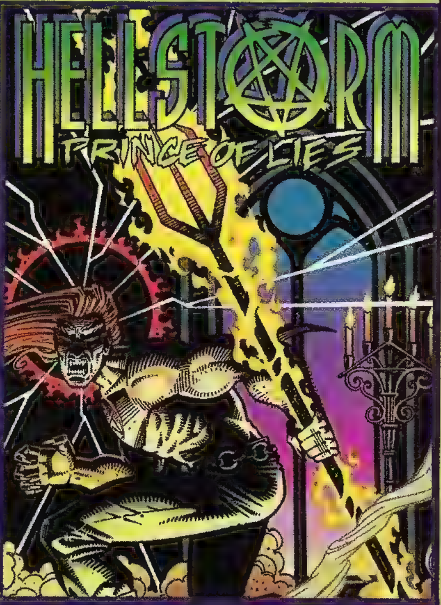
Lately, Dark Horse's Legend imprint has been issuing some of the best comics on the market, like *Sin City* and *Madman Comics*. The tradition continues with Dark Horse's latest, *Hellboy*, which just may be the best original comic book series of the year. As explained in issue #1, Hellboy's origins are linked to the end of WWII, Nazis and the occult—that kind of thing. But in the present day, Hellboy is the "World's Greatest Paranormal Investigator." His latest case, involving poisonous frogs, Arctic expeditions and cursed houses, sees him joined by a pyrokinetic woman and a fish-man. The story and art are uniformly great, and with the ongoing backup story featuring the origins of Art Adams' wild Monkeyman and O'Brien, Hellboy is the most comic you can get for $2.50, and just may be the coolest comic you can add to your collection.
RATING: 9.9

HELLSTORM series

Marvel Comics

Written by Warren Ellis, Art by Leonardo Manco

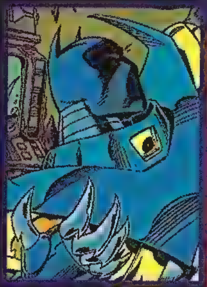
Hellstorm got off to a rocky start last year, but since Len Kaminski and now Warren Ellis assumed the writing chores, it has rapidly become the coolest comic on Marvel's roster. *Hellstorm*'s main character is the son of Satan, a dastardly bugger whose recent exploits have included storming the gates of Heaven to force the Higher Authorities to accept souls wrongly sent to Hell, taking over the Church of Lucifer, and joining forces with a supernaturally powered occult terrorist. Clearly, *Hellstorm* is one nasty bit of business, and the team of Ellis and Manco (whose art is terrific) pull no punches in evoking that business. Even compared to DC's Vertigo titles, which are generally considered horrific comics, Marvel's *Hellstorm* is pure, hardcore horror like nothing else in the mainstream.
RATING: 8.5



THE FLASH

COMIC NEWS & NOTES

- Watch for three major releases from Image in July: Rob Liefeld's *Doom's IV*, Whilce Portacio's three-years-in-the-making-we-don't-believe-for-a-minute-we'll-actually-see-it *Wetworks*, and Jae (*Namor*) Lee's long-awaited *Hellshock*. The advance artwork on this last horrific miniseries is killer—don't miss it!
- Valiant will launch three new titles this year: *Geomancer* (July), *Timewalker* (August) and *The Visitor* (fall). The Geomancer will not be the current character using that name, as he dies in the upcoming *Chaos Effect* crossover. *The Chaos Effect* is Valiant's new major disaster that kills millions of people and causes extraordinary damage around the world. Valiant has promised major changes for other characters, including *Archer & Armstrong* and *Magnus, Robot Fighter*. If the "change" for Geoff the Geomancer is death, we can only wonder if other characters will also meet their demise.
- Ultraverse has adopted a phrase that Marvel discarded ages ago, which you'll see in July when they publish the first issues of *Giant-Sized Freex* and *Giant-Sized Mantra*. At least they're not making the same mistake Marvel did in publishing a comic called *Giant-Size Man-Thing*. Imagine that.
- Putnam Berkley is apparently planning to publish several Marvel-related books in the near future, including an anthology of Spider-Man stories and novels featuring Spidey and the Hulk. It looks as though the Hulk novel will be written by Peter David.
- In July, Defiant will try to repeat the success Jim Shooter has with *Unity* at Valiant by releasing *Schism*, a crossover which will team all the Defiant Universe's major heroes and villains against a common enemy.
- DC's calendar for the next year is loaded with new series, both limited and ongoing. New Vertigo monthlies include Grant Morrison's *The Invisible* and *Preacher*, from the *Hellblazer* team of Garth Ennis and Steve Dillon. When *Sandman* comes to an end sometime next year, a new series called *The Dreaming*, featuring *Sandman's* supporting characters, will be launched. New ongoing series in the DC Universe will include *Azrael*, *Aquaman*, *Black Lightning*, *The Power Of Shazam!*, Chris Claremont's *Sovereign 7*, *R.E.B.E.L.S. '94*, *Manhunter*, *Primal Force*, *Fate* and *Starman*.
- Prolific writer Joe R. Lansdale has projects going with at least three different comic companies. Dark Horse is adapting several of his short stories under the title *By Bizarre Hands* as well as his novel called *The Drive-In*. At DC he'll do *Jonah Hex: Riders Of The Worm And Such*, a sequel to the sleeper hit, *Jonah Hex: Two Gun Mojo*. Finally, at Topps, Lansdale will be doing a new *Lone Ranger* series.



ALL COMIC REVIEWS AND COLUMN BY CHRIS GOLDEN

LOBO IN THE CHAIR

DC Comics

Written by Alan Grant, illustrated by Martin Emond

In his many appearances in such teen books as *L.E.G.I.O.N.*, Lobo rarely transcends the mediocrity of your average DC superhero. But when he's going strictly for laughs, he gets them: *In The Chair* is pointless, but very funny. After rounding up the entire "wanted" population of a barren backwater planet (except for the notorious Winter brothers, Edgar and Johnny—named after the famous blues-rocker brothers), the Main Man is in dire need of a shower, shave and a haircut. Unfortunately, he falls asleep "in the chair," where the Winter brothers catch up with him and exact a cruel vengeance: They rearrange his hair into a Hendrix afro, an Elvis pompadour and other 'dos—and then kill him.

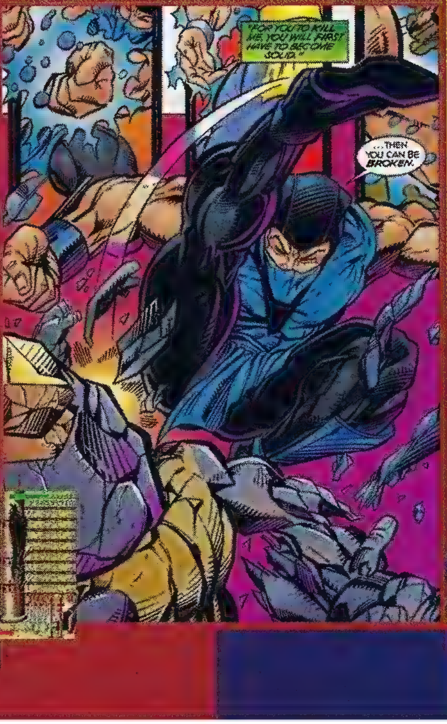
You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll have a friggin' heart attack. **RATING: 7**

MORTAL KOMBAT #1

Malibu Comics Available: July

Written by Charles Marshall, Pencilled by Patrick Rolo, Inked by Bobby Rae

Goro, Shang Tsung, Kano, Sonya Blade, Liu Kang, Sub-Zero, Scorpion and Rayden: all your favorite characters from the original *Mortal Kombat* video game have been immortalized on the printed page, kicking major ass the way they always do. While the premier issue of Malibu's *Mortal Kombat* comic does serve as a general introduction to the kombatants and their histories, it's still loaded with plenty of Johnny Cage-Shadow-Kick-butt action. Gathering at a Hong Kong dock, the fighters board a mysterious ship bound for former Grand Champion Shang Tsung's island, where the tournament—the ultra-violent "Mortal Kombat"—is to take place. The second issue promises the beginning of the bloody battle—that's where the real fun begins. But it makes you wonder where they'll go when the tournament is over. Maybe a crossover battle between Shang's gang and the blockheads in *Virtua Fighter*! **RATING: 6**


"FOR YOU TO KILL ME, YOU WILL FIRST HAVE TO BECOME SOLID."
...THEN YOU CAN BE BROKEN.

SILVER SURFER #93

Marvel Comics

Written by Ron Marz, Pencilled by Bart Sears and Tom Grindberg, Inked by Raymond Kryssing

Let's get this straight—Bart Sears isn't just a hot artist, he's a great artist, and his *Silver Surfer* is a true classic. Unfortunately, that's about the best thing that can be said about this book. The first part of the much-hyped "Down To Earth" storyline—in which the Surfer dude returns to terra firma, basically, to hang with his buds—does not come close to living up to expectations. While Marz' writing has been improving, this story represents a decided step backwards for him. In issue #93, the Surfer visits the Fantastic Four to inform them of Nova's death, and he and the Human Torch engage in a somewhat meaningless battle. A tired story, to say the least, though Ben Grimm comes off well in the storyline. The next issue, meanwhile, threatens us with the return of the Mole Man! (Oh, boy!) Obviously, a *Silver Surfer* storyline with its own distinct, significant subtitle was too much to hope for, and instead we're presented with a simple reminder of the Surfer's relationships with a number of Earth's heroes. **RATING: 4**

STAR SLAMMERS #1

Malibu Bravura

Written and Illustrated by Walter Simonson

Hot sci-fi action is the name of this game. Though this series gets off to a rather confusing start, once it gets moving the story is intriguing and the art is Grade-A Simonson.

On a spacecraft transporting a captive wounded Star Slammer, a young psi/hacker and the sexy Colonel Phaedra face off in a powerful struggle. Things go haywire when a shadowy figure boards the ship and kills all the guards and the prisoner. The major problem here is that, if you're unfamiliar with the previous adventures of the *Star Slammers*, there's a huge void in the story's atmosphere (though the plot itself doesn't necessarily revolve around such knowledge). Also, I can't help but admit that the whole time I was reading this, I was yearning for the days of *Alien Legion*. **RATING: 7**

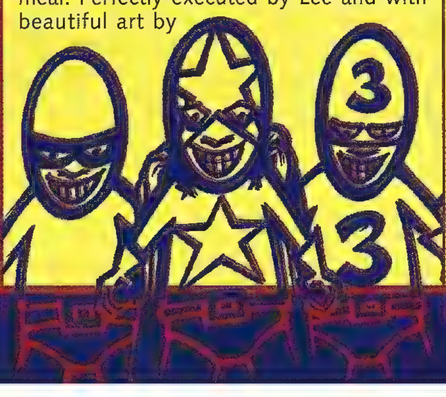
VAMPS #1

DC Comics/Vertigo

Written by Elaine Lee, illustrated by William Simpson

A simple plot: Five female vampires tire of their male leader and take him down—*hard*. On their own for the first time, they hit the road in search of a good time, and find it. Soon their antics attract the attention of the law.

More interesting than the plot, however, is Lee's take on traditional vampiric mythology, as evidenced by issue #1's contention that a recently fed vampire is utterly vulnerable and must therefore be protected after a hearty meal. Perfectly executed by Lee and with beautiful art by *Hellblazer*'s Simpson, the first issue of *Vamps* will coax readers into coming back for the whole mini-series. While certainly mature enough to fit Vertigo's editorial goals, *Vamps* is, in fact, one of the company's most commercial projects to date. Female vampires are a popular bunch, and Lee and Simpson's fanged biker gals are as sexy as they come. **RATING: 8**

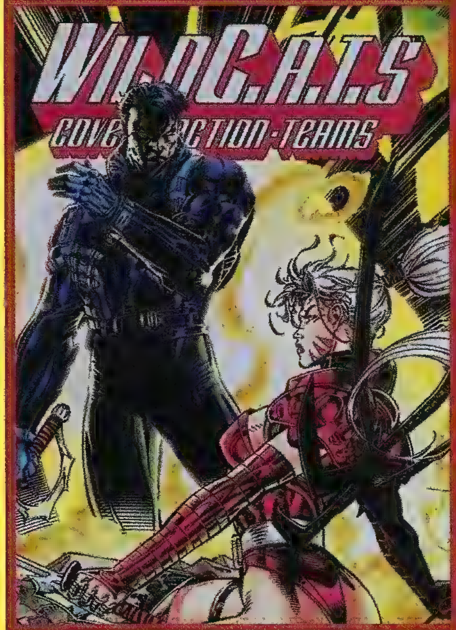


WILDC.A.T.S. #10

Image Comics

Written by Chris Claremont, Pencilled by Jim Lee, Inked by Scott Williams

Sci-fi movies like *Alien* and *The Thing* must have been on Chris Claremont's mind when he wrote the first of his three issues of *WildC.A.T.S.*, in which he introduces his own character, The Huntsman. Overall, it's a fun, action-packed story that serves as an easy introduction to Claremont's new characters and to the regular cast of *WildC.A.T.S.* Still, it's impossible not to be reminded of the best of Claremont's work on *Uncanny X-Men*. Not that this is up to that level, but it does have the same flavor. The art, featuring the hottest of babes and the ugliest of monsters, is typical of Lee. The team of Claremont and Lee has the potential to be awesome—let's see where they go with *WildC.A.T.S.* **RATING: 7**



BLAZE #1

Marvel Comics

Written by Larry Hama, Pencilled by Henry Martinez, inked by Bud LaRosa

So far, Marvel Midnight Sons titles have proven to be a dismal lot. Until now. *Blaze* is so far superior to the other titles, that its relation to them may be its only low point. Gone are the stupid metal faceplate and the lame storylines. Instead, we have the weird Quentin Carnival living up to its horrific potential, ghostly serial killers, cursed sentient eyeballs and a chilling atmosphere missing from Marvel since the days of the b&w *Tales Of The Zombie*. Marvel's been trying to mix the supernatural and superheroes for decades—they've finally done it. **RATING:10**

HULK

continued from page 57

The game is based on the older, original Hulk—no red Hulks or gray Hulks or things like that. You be fighting traditional Hulk enemies, like Rhino, and trying to get to The Leader. Throughout the game, you'll fight legions of smaller guys who are, of course, not as big as the Hulk. But when you get to the end of each level, there's another major Hulk enemy waiting for you.

FLUX: How involved was Marvel in the design of the game?

BOTCH: Marvel takes a very serious interest in everything they license. They're not the type of licenser to say, "Here, sign the contract, agree to pay this and we'll sign off on it when it's done." Marvel was involved pretty much right from the beginning as far as approving storylines and artwork, and making sure that the Hulk wasn't doing anything out of character. For example, in this game, the Hulk doesn't use any weapons—you use Hulk moves like the pile driver and head-butt and things that are very particular to the Hulk. As Bruce Banner, you can—hopefully—find a gun to have something to protect yourself when you're in that mode.

Marvel Comics also did the package illustration and the intro to the instruction manual. And instead of just a few paragraphs that set up the game, Marvel wrote an eight-page comic book.

FLUX: How do you transform from Bruce Banner into the Hulk?

BOTCH: You start as the Hulk and collect gamma capsules to keep your strength. The more power you have, the more moves you can perform. If you don't have enough energy, you turn back into Banner. But there are times that you *want* to be Banner. There are passageways that you can't get through as the Hulk, because they're too small—and they may be shortcuts.

We've introduced things like that for the strategy element. *Hulk* is not a game where you just smash through doors. Bruce Banner was a pretty clever scientist, so we tried to keep a mental element in the game.

FLUX: What was the biggest problem you encountered when programming the game?

BOTCH: The Hulk does the things you want to do in a video game. He picks things up, smashes through walls, throws Jeeps—I mean, that just sounds like fun. But when you get into game design, you say to yourself, "Well, there's a lot more that we have to do here than just smash things." That's where the game elements had to come in: "*Why* does he get transformed into Banner? Why would you *want* to be Banner at some times?" Deciding that the Hulk is going to pick up and smash a lot of things was pretty easy. Deciding how to make the game *more* than just smashing things was the challenge.

FLUX: There are many comic characters far more popular than the Hulk. Why did you choose him?

BOTCH: It's an interesting question, because when you bring something out like this, you'll hear, "Gee, the Hulk isn't *X-Men*. The Hulk isn't *Spider-Man*. The Hulk's not even on television now." But the Hulk is a classic character. I don't think you'll find many people who haven't heard of the Hulk. We really wanted to do a game on the Hulk, and

continued on next page

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we had quite a good time doing it.

FLUX: The Hulk's mostly known for beating up people. Were you concerned at all about the controversy over violence in video games?

BOTCH: We're always sensitive to that, but to make the Hulk a pacifist wouldn't be true to his character. The Hulk will take a robot and smash it into a bowling ball. That's violent, but it's not like you're making some *human* into a bowling ball. We're not doing anything that Nintendo or Sega would not approve. It's all within the bounds that we thought would make it acceptable to everyone. But again, this is the Incredible Hulk—he *does* smash things.

DANZIG

continued from page 53

will also be doing some work. We'll also be publishing comics based on characters that I've created. One's called *Satanica*, about this bad-ass demon girl, and the other is a character called *Goth*. I've already sub-plotted the first 20 issues of *Satanica*. We'll also be publishing a comic based on a Frank Frazetta character called *Death Dealer*. And I've scripted the first two issues of *Dark Wolf*, another Frazetta character.

FLUX: As a publisher, how do you feel about polybags, foil covers and such gimmicks?

DANZIG: One thing that Image does that I don't like is they'll release a cover in silver foil and the same one in gold foil, but they'll only send the gold to retailers as gifts, who'll turn around and sell them for like 60 bucks. I also hate hologram covers—they're terrible. That's not cool. I do like foil covers sometimes, and I do like it when comics have raised covers, like a recent *Conan The Adventurer* comic I saw. I don't like it when foil is used as a gimmick, but it's okay when you think about it beforehand and put it on *all* the covers—not just a few limited-edition special covers. I mean, it's either foil-enhanced or it's not. And there should be a good reason for it—not just that the artist was too lazy to draw a good background. None of our comics will have foil, but some will have raised covers. But they won't be special editions—they'll all be the same.

FLUX: What's your impression of Image Comics?

DANZIG: Right now, I'd say that Image is the standard for comics. It's funny because they could have the crummiest artists in the world but their stuff still looks good because it's computer colored. Image also takes care of their people, and that's the way it should be. Record companies should learn from Image. [*laughs*] I like *Spawn*, but I don't like *Youngblood*. The Todd McFarlane/Frank Miller *Batman/Spawn* crossover was great, but I knew the DC version would be crummy as soon as I heard they put Klaus Janson on it. [*laughs*]

FLUX: How would you assess yourself as an artist?

DANZIG: I really don't have the time to devote to it, but I wish I did. I do know that I'm a much better penciler than an inker. [*laughs*] I draw all the time, like when I'm on the bus or in a hotel. I draw monsters, big muscle guys and chicks with big tits.

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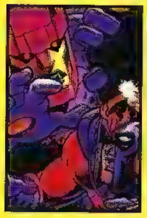

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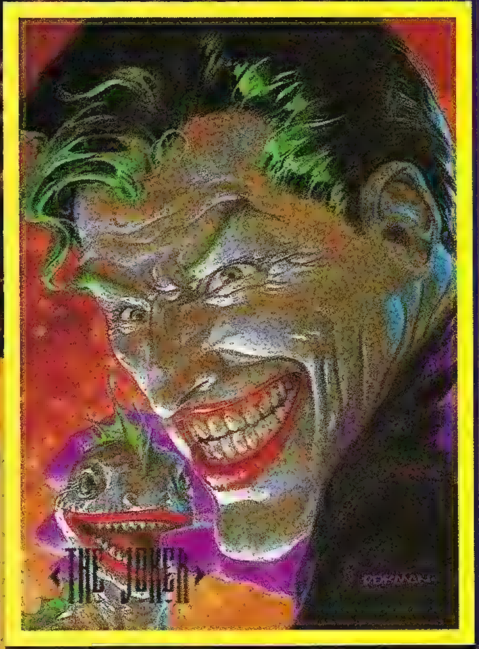
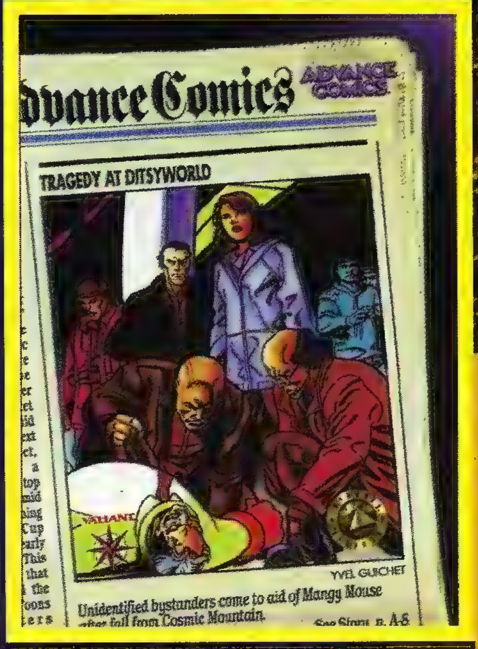
TRADING CARD NEWS & NOTES

BY STEVE FRITZ



SKYBOX DC MASTER SERIES


Advance Comics
TRAGEDY AT DITSYWORLD
YVEL GUICHET
Unidentified bystanders come to aid of Mangy Mouse after fall from Cosmic Mountain.

UPPER DECK'S VALIANT FILES SERIES

•Mortal Kombat trading cards have arrived! Classic Games, Inc. recently issued a 100-card series based on the king of all fighting games. The cards consist of character profiles and screen shots of the game's bloodiest battles taken directly from the original Mortal Kombat coin-op. The "Fighter Vs. Fighter" cards also feature special moves for the home versions of the game. Also included in the set are special Mortal Kombat II character preview cards, with specific arcade moves for each character.

•The Marvel Comics edition of Fleer's super-premium Flair card line is set to hit this month. Featuring all-new artwork from some of the most reputable names in comics—like Todd McFarlane, both Lees (Jae and Jim), the Kuberts and even the late-great Jack "King" Kirby—the 150-card set will include all your favorite characters from the Marvel world. The cards are gorgeous, but expensive—we're talkin' $4 a pack!

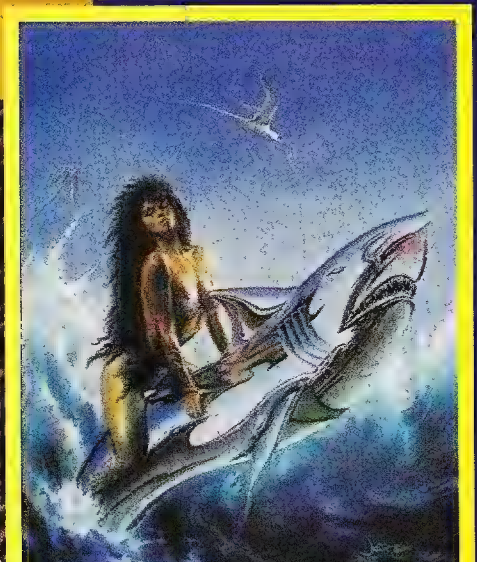
•SkyBox scored big with their Marvel and Star Trek Master Series sets, and now they've done it again with DC Comics. With the Zero Hour approaching, this 90-card Master set recalls DC's top characters, including Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman, The Joker and Doomsday. Watch for four foil-enhanced cards of Wonder Woman, Aquaman, Green Arrow and Hawkman, as well as special double-sided Spectra-etched bonus cards. Also, look for special, randomly-inserted SkyDisc full-dimensional hologram chase cards of Superman.

•Comic Images gets back to comic art with its 90-card Bone set. If you're lucky, you might even find a certificate for a piece of original art by #1 Bonehead Jeff Smith. Happy hunting.

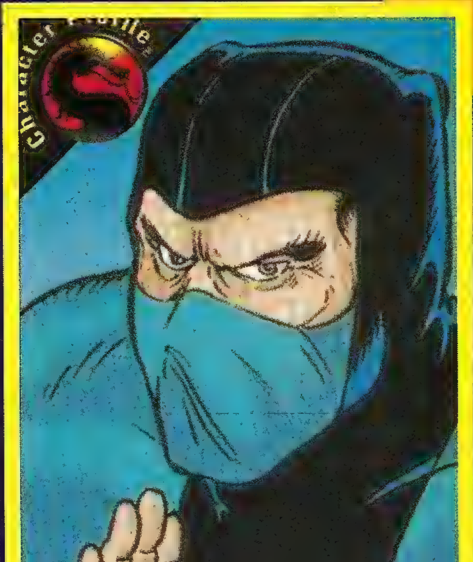
•Topps has reissued its classic camp Mars Attacks! card set in all its former glory and then some. The set has long been a favorite of those who love sick entertainment cards or watch too much Mystery Science Theater 3000. The new 90-card set will include the original 55 cards, plus 35 cards of new art. The "DC In Flames" card is worth the price of admission alone.

•Jim Lee and Co. (corporately known as Wildstorm) are doing their own set of chromium cards. The 100-card set features artwork from Lee, Dale Keown, Kelly Jones, Sam Keith and Jae Lee. Subject matter includes WildC.A.T.S., Stormwatch, Gen 13 and the other Wildstorm characters. The cards will also be accompanied by a game, with the rules on each wrapper.

•Artist Julie M. Bell, that totally-buffed, iron-pumping Texas belle famous for illustrations of scantily-clad females, muscle-bound barbarians and liquid-metal creatures, will have a 55-card set of her work released by the Cardz company. A true drooler's delight.



JULIE BELL (CARDZ)



CLASSIC'S MORTAL KOMBAT SERIES

•Available now from Upper Deck/Pyramid is The Valiant Files: Secrets From The Harbinger Foundation. This 120-card set features all new artwork with valuable information about Valiant characters (Ninjak, Bloodshot, etc.), including their vital statistics, powers and character analyses. The cards are superbly crafted, and you can buy the set in one shot—in a hard plastic "file cabinet" instead of standard paper display boxes.

•Fleer, SkyBox and Upper Deck will all release card sets of the Dream Team 2 pro b-ball squad when the team takes on all comers in Canada this August. NBA Skyscrapers named to the super team include Shaq, Mourning, Johnson, Thomas, Kemp, Wilkins, Dumars, Coleman, Majerle and Hardaway.

news
and
notes

Ha, ha, ha,hee, hee, hee, haw, haw, ha, ha, ha!

• •

STONE TEMPLE PILOTS

continued from page 58

I begin? There's absolutely no passion in my heart for rock critics. I suppose I just don't appreciate people who get their kicks out of tearing others apart. There seems to be some sadistic thrill in it for most rock critics. They sit behind their desks all day long and choose the words they want to use to slag bands or spread rumors. Bands are nothing but dart boards for them. I don't think it takes a lot of courage to talk shit about somebody and print it in a magazine. But I can't lie and say it doesn't hurt when some person who doesn't know you takes stabs at you—not just musically, but personally as well.

FLUX: Don't the thousands of fans that love STP make up for the few critics that don't?

WEILAND: You appreciate the fans on one level, but on the other side is a responsibility that's thrown at you to be what people expect you to be. And I really have a hard time just being what I think I should be—and I have a hard time dealing with my own problems. I wouldn't want people to follow many of the footsteps I've taken, and I don't think anybody has the right to tell someone what to do or think.

The lyrics I wrote for this new album are much more personal, because of what was going on at the time. It was actually a very difficult experience.

FLUX: What happened?

WEILAND: All kinds of things went wrong. It's weird doing interviews right now, because we just finished the record and didn't have a very good time doing it. We're just starting to speak to each other again. It was a lot of shit—personal things that I don't feel comfortable discussing.

But it's amazing that we actually made the record we did, so I guess on some level we were in tune.

FLUX: Is the song "Army Ants" about these problems?

WEILAND: There are some people who write descriptive songs and that's all they write—I don't feel comfortable doing that. If there's something on my mind, that's what I write. And that's all the time, not just when I *have* to write a song. If I don't have my journal with me, I'll stuff my pockets with slips of paper—whatever it takes. I've got a whole drawer full of all kinds of material. So when I wrote that song, it was from a page of words I'd written. I suppose it deals with conformity. Army ants are little creatures that all look the same and are trained to do the same job without thinking.

FLUX: In "Interstate Love Song," you sing, "You lied—goodbye." That sounds pretty final.

WEILAND: It's such a personal thing that it's tough to open up about what I was struggling with. But I suppose it has the obvious theme of betrayal.

FLUX: Betrayal of the music biz powers around you?

WEILAND: Well, they're the ones who create the shit we all have to sit in. That's where the whole silly myth of rock and roll becomes a lie. You have this dream to play music, and you think that you'll hit a certain point and achieve happiness. But when you get to that level, it seems like you're caught in a dark pool at night without being able to see which direction you're going. And that's weird. You can either get really tripped up by it—which sometimes happens—or you can try to brush it off and loathe it with a sense of humor.

FLUX: Are you happy?

WEILAND: I'm a lot happier than I've been in the last eight or nine months. I feel like there's a chance for rebirth, not career-wise, but for ourselves, as a band, as a relationship. I'm just an individual who eats, sleeps, shits, whatever—but because I'm in this position, people assume that I'm a superhero and things just bounce off me and don't affect me. That's bullshit, a lie. My feelings get hurt. Things anger me, you know? And you can get screwed up and lose sight of that initial feeling you had when you first started—the feeling that made you wanna play all night long in the garage with your best friends, just making noise. ♦

Flux Fact:

The mechanical bunny that stars in Energizer battery commercials weighs 40 lbs., is 2 1/2 feet tall and costs $70,000. And it doesn't run on Energizer flashlight batteries.

SOURCE: THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, 1/17/94

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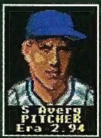
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Era 2.94

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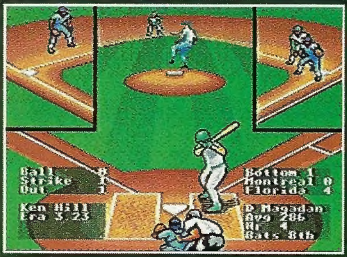
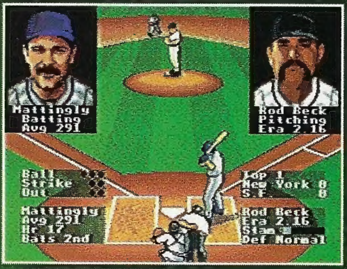
L Dykstra
Center Fld
Avg 385

- Game play that's ***twice as fast*** as RBI '93, plus rotoscoped animation for incredibly lifelike movement of runners, batters and the pitcher!


Ball
Strike
Out
Ken Hill
Era 3.23
Bottom 1
Montreal 0
Florida 4
D Magadan
Avg 286
Hr 4
Bats 8th

C Fielder
1st Base
Avg 267

- On-screen baseball card-style player pictures with their '93 stats.
- MLBPA licensed, which means over 800 real players from 28 real teams.


Mattingly
Batting
Avg 291
Rod Beck
Pitching
Era 2.16
Ball
Strike
Out
Top 1
New York 0
S.F. 0
Mattingly
Avg 291
Hr 17
Bats 2nd
Rod Beck
Era 2.16
Stam
Def Normal

J Gonzalez
Left Field
Avg 318

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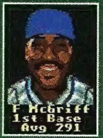
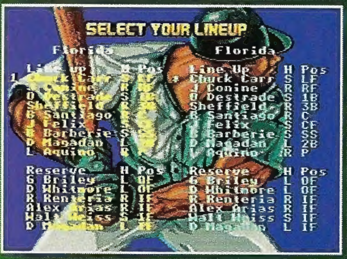

F McGriff
1st Base
Avg 291



```
SELECT YOUR LINEUP
                    Florida
              Line Up       H Pos
            * Chuck Carr    S LF
              J Conine      R RF
              O Destrade    S 1B
              Sheffield     R 3B
              B Santiago    R C
              J Felix       S CF
              B Barberie    S SS
              D Magadan     L 2B
              L Aquino      R P

              Reserve       H Pos
              G Briley      L OF
              D Whitmore    L OF
              R Renteria    R IF
              Alex Arias    R IF
              Walt Weiss    S IF
              D Magadan     L IF
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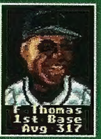
It's not __real__ unless it's RBI '94.


F Thomas
1st Base
Avg 317

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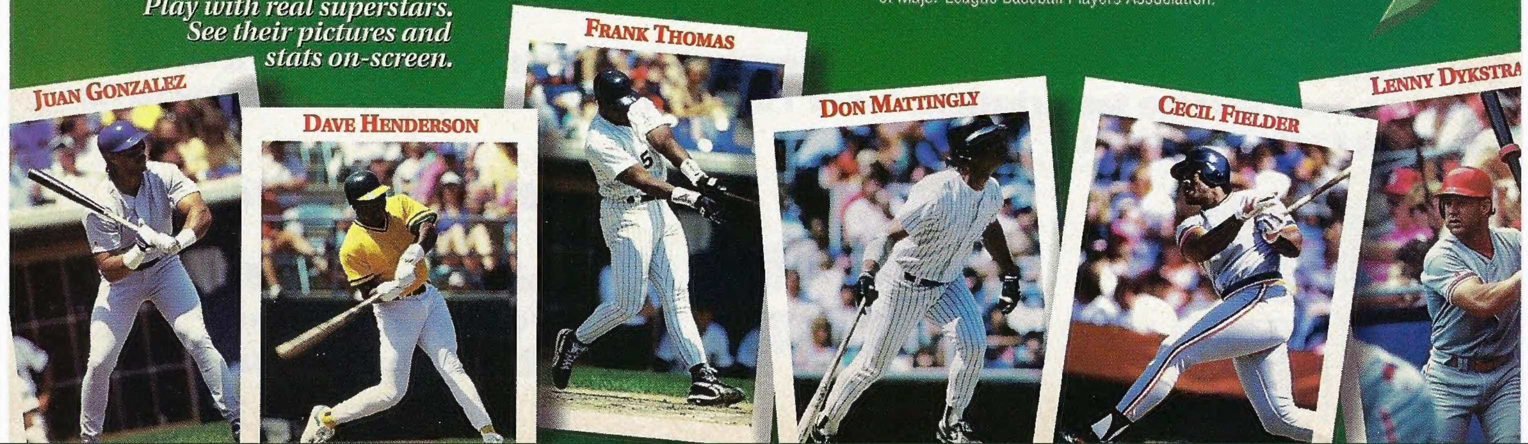
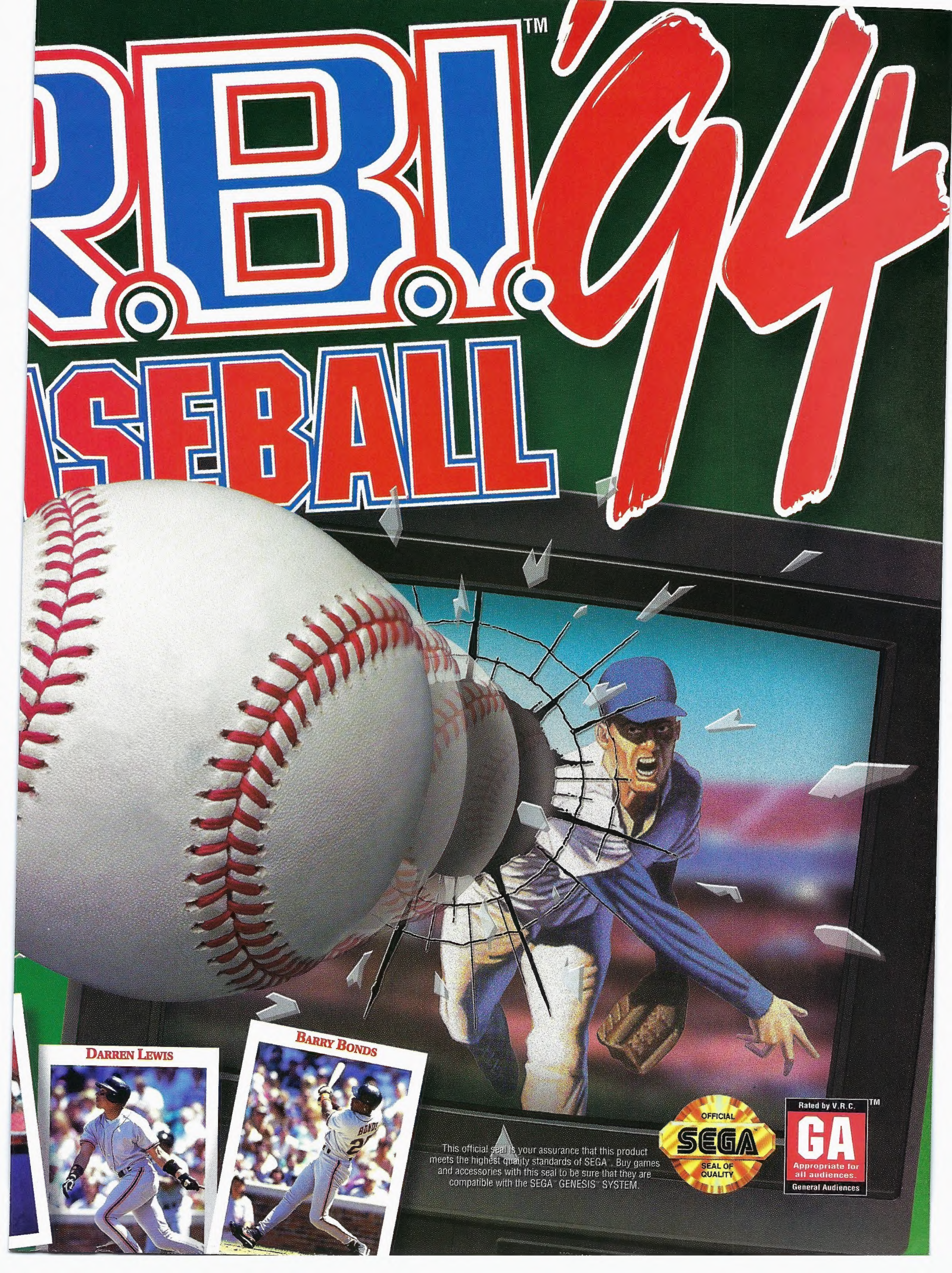

Juan Gonzalez
Dave Henderson
Frank Thomas
Don Mattingly
Cecil Fielder
Lenny Dykstra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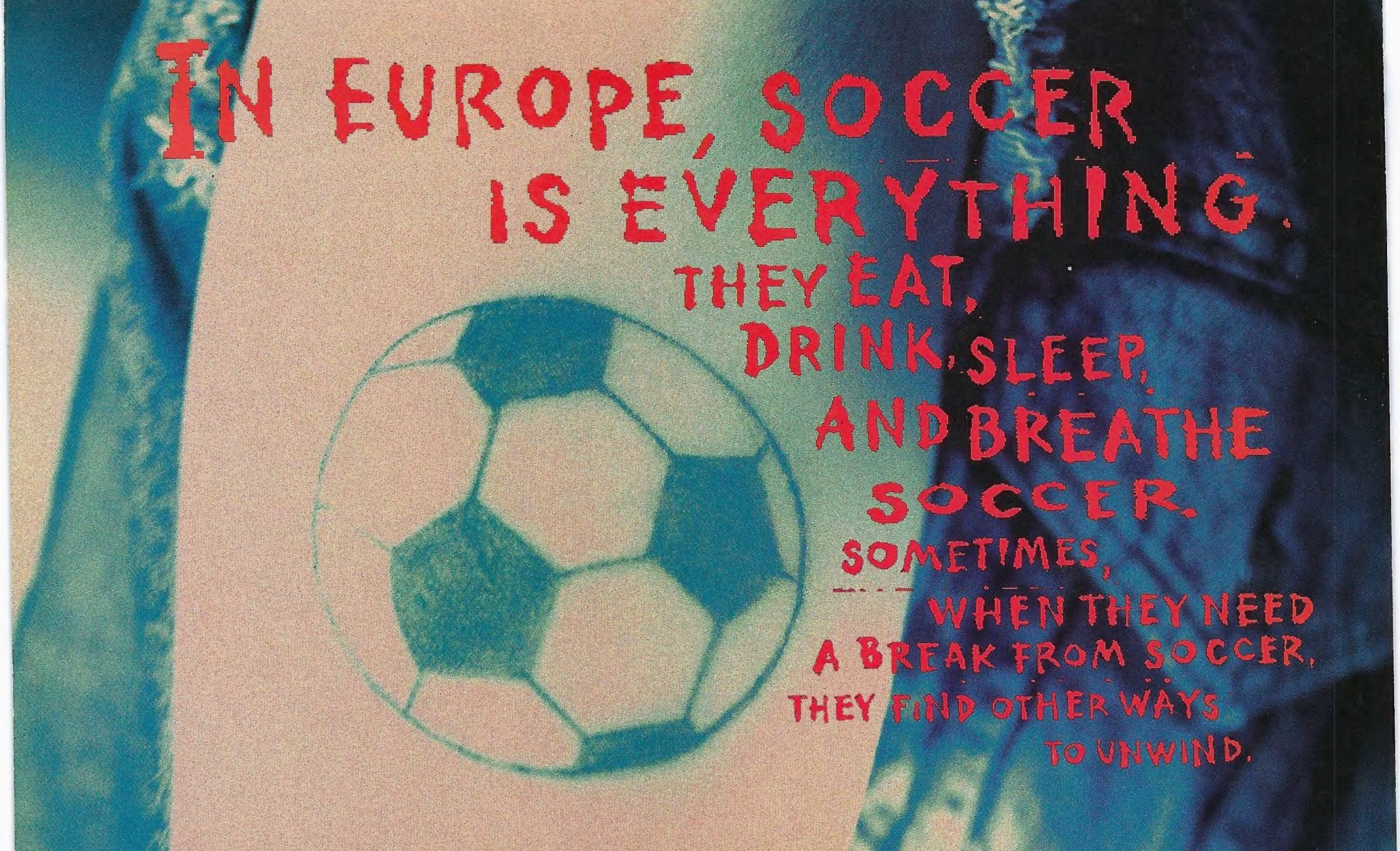
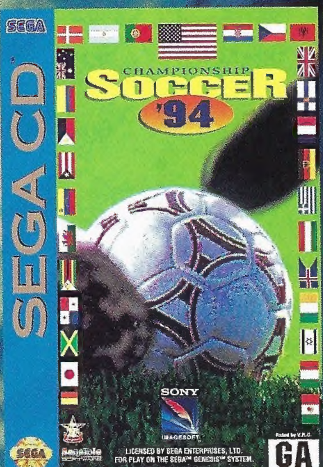

IN EUROPE, SOCCER IS EVERYTHING.
THEY EAT, DRINK, SLEEP, AND BREATHE SOCCER.
SOMETIMES, WHEN THEY NEED A BREAK FROM SOCCER, THEY FIND OTHER WAYS TO UNWIND.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